

# GONE ASTRAY

## LEAVES FROM AN EMPEROR'S

✦ ✦ ✦ DIARY ✦ ✦ ✦





# GONE ASTRAY

*SOME LEAVES  
FROM AN EMPEROR'S DIARY*

NEW YORK  
JOHN LANE COMPANY  
MCMXVIII

II 229  
.GT6

Copyright, 1918,  
By JOHN LANE COMPANY

SEP 30 1918



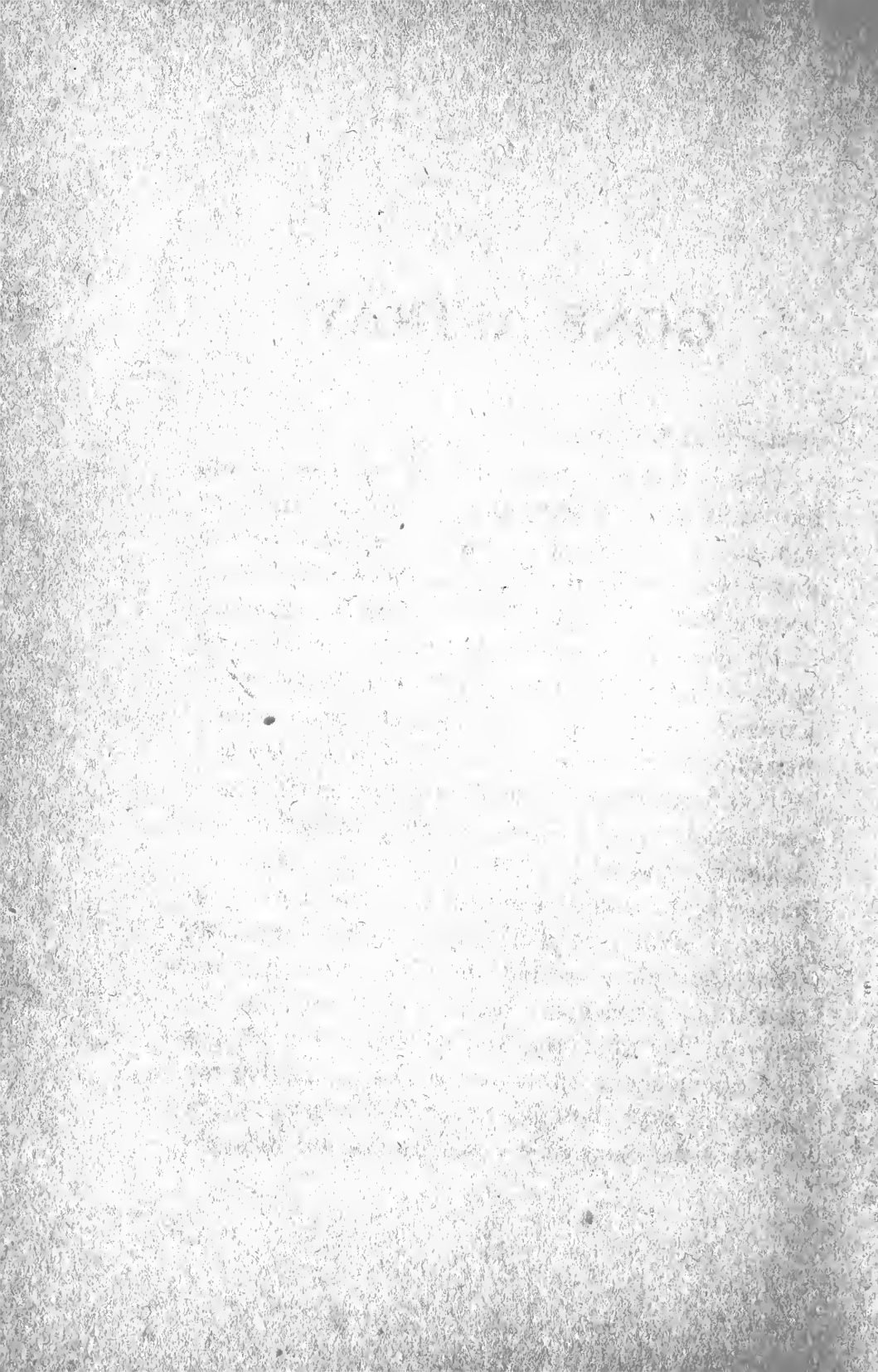


## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The manuscript of this volume was brought to the publishers by a person well known to them. Whilst it does not purport to be an actual transcription of the Kaiser's diary, it sufficiently reveals his extraordinary character to render it a valuable psychological study, setting forth, as it does, his ideas and opinions regarding personal, domestic and political matters, from the days of his boyhood to the present hour. Whether viewed from the standpoint of a personal document or the result of a life-long study by a marvellously gifted student of character, the volume will undoubtedly prove interesting and enlightening to every reader.



# **GONE ASTRAY**



# GONE ASTRAY

*January 27th, 1869.*

This is the first great day of my life. I am ten years old, and begin my political and military career. It is indeed a solemn occasion for me, and I feel deeply the responsibilities which have become mine. I mean to live up to the standard of my glorious ancestors, to be, like them, a good soldier, and if possible to add some lustre to our Crown. And I mean also to make good resolutions and to abide by them: I mean to keep myself and my temper under control as far as I can, and I intend to do what my grandfather and father do, and what all the Princes of our House have always done. I intend to write a diary in which I shall record all my thoughts, and note what takes place around me. My father tells me that it is a good habit, because it allows us to see later on our mistakes, and to notice the changes that take place in our opinions. I suppose that my father is right, though I never like to have before my eyes the story of my past faults and failures.

This, however, is wrong, and I am quite aware of it. I must try to cure myself of this feeling. To-day I have ceased to be a baby; I have begun my real existence and I want it to be a serious one. I know very well that I am not like other people, that I am placed far above the rest of mankind, and that I must never forget the privileges of my position as a Prince of one of the oldest reigning Houses in Germany. I like to think that such is the case, though my mother tells me that I ought not to attach so much importance to that fact, that the only thing I must strive for is to be a good man like her own father. Probably what she says is true, but I have never felt quite at my ease with my mother. She does not seem to understand me, and sometimes I think that I bore her with my questions. It is different with my grandfather. He loves me I think more than my mother does. She never takes me on her knees as I have seen other mothers do with boys of my age; nor hugs me as my Aunt Louise hugs my Cousin Fritz. She is good to me, but she seems to be always thinking of what I must do when I am older, of what I ought to learn, and I feel that she would like me to be different from my relatives, though in what way, she does not say. With grandfather it is not so. He tells me stories when he has a spare moment. He relates

to me tales of his youth, he speaks to me of the days when as a young man he entered Paris with his father, King Frederick William III., and of all the great generals who fought at that time, and who at last beat Napoleon, Blücher, Yorcke, Stein and others. I like to hear about them. I like to think that in her hours of adversity our country remained true to itself. I like to believe that one day I may also be a great warrior. My father says that this is an unhealthy ambition, and I cannot understand why he thinks such a thing, he who showed himself such an excellent general during the last war. I wish I were older. Perhaps I would then understand my parents better. And yet it seems to me that I shall always cling to my grandfather, because I know that he loves me so well. This morning he had tears in his eyes when he spoke to me, and I nearly cried also, but my tutor was there, and I felt afraid he would say I was too big to weep. Yet it was such an impressive ceremony, and even my mother looked moved when I was dressed in my uniform of the First Regiment of Foot Guards, with my yellow ribbon of the order of the Black Eagle, and when my tutor brought me into the room where my grandfather and grandmother were already awaiting me. I had been several times in that room, which is one

of the handsomest apartments of our Royal Castle, but it never appeared so imposing to me as it did this morning. My grandfather took me by the hand, and told me that I was never to forget this day when for the first time I put on a uniform and was promoted to an officer's rank in the army. He spoke to me of my duties, told me that later on they would be heavy and responsible, that I must never forget that I was a Prussian Prince and a Hohenzollern, and that I must model my conduct on that of my great ancestors, our old Fritz, and the Great Elector, any many others. I was particularly moved when the King told me that in all probability I shall find myself one day in the place which he now occupies, and that under those circumstances I must never lose sight of the principles which have made our House so great. "We were never a rich nation, my boy," he told me, "but we have always succeeded in fighting our way against our rivals and competitors, because we have always known how to lean on our army, and it is this army that has always in the hours of danger proved the salvation of our dynasty and of our people. You are an officer to-day, William, and you must bear in mind that it is a great honour, especially to be a Prussian officer."

I kissed the King's hand, and it was then that



I saw there were tears in his kind blue eyes. The Queen, too, was crying, and she drew me towards her with unusual tenderness. Then my father came and congratulated me on my new dignity. "You are the youngest lieutenant in our army," he said. "I hope that one day you will show yourself one of the bravest."

My mother alone said nothing. She was shedding tears also, but she did not attempt to control them, and I wondered what it was that made her cry on a day when she ought to have been so happy. The King gave a lunch after the ceremony, and for the first time in my life I sat at table with grown-up people. During the meal my grandfather proposed my health. I felt I was being made much of, and it pleased me that such was the case. There were a great many guests, most of whom I had never seen and only knew by name, but when we had risen from the table, General von Moltke, the Chief of our Staff, came up to me and also congratulated me on my promotion. I like General von Moltke. He is a real soldier and looks more like one than Count Bismarck, though the latter is perhaps more imposing. I do not care for the Count, however, because he seemed to treat me as he would any other boy of my age, and not as he ought to treat a future King. For I shall be a King one day. I know

it, and my grandfather said so. I wonder whether this will be soon, or whether I shall have to wait for it a long time. My father is no longer a young man, he is nearly forty. I would not like to wait until I am forty to become the master.

*January 30th, 1869.*

I must contrive to hide this diary. I feel that when I write it I like to say all that I think, but at the same time I am not sure whether my father and mother would be pleased if they should read it. I think that I ought to try to live my own life and to prepare myself for the future duties which will be mine. The ceremony which took place the other day when I was promoted to an officer impressed me deeply, and the more I think about it, the more I like to remember it. I am really an officer now, and in a few years I shall be allowed to begin seriously my military duties. I feel already quite different when I drill, and yesterday I could not help saying to the sergeant who teaches me how to do it, that now I was a lieutenant and could punish him if I liked. He did not seem to care for this remark, I don't know why. He must understand that there was nothing offensive in it, merely my assertion of the dignity which is mine. Somehow, though I am very

proud to be a Prince of Prussia, I feel prouder to be a Prussian officer. It seems to me that Prussian officers will yet be called to play a great part in the history of the world. I said something of the kind to my tutor, Mr. Hinzpeter, but he told me that I was still too young to be able to judge of such important questions, and that I had better wait until I had more experience in life before thinking in general of these things. I found this reply very strange. I know that I am but a child in years, but in my position one ought to outgrow childish ideas as soon as possible, and how can I do so, if I am not allowed to discuss the subjects which are nearest to my heart?

*June 1st, 1869.*

To-day I had a long conversation with my mother. We went out for a walk together and I asked her to tell me why she seemed to like my brothers and sisters better than she did me. Mamma seemed very troubled by my question. She replied that I was quite mistaken in thinking she loved me less than her other children. On the contrary she cared for me far more than I thought, but I was to occupy one day a very great position, and she believed it was her duty to prepare me for it by not allowing me to give

way to anything that might savour of sentimentality. She said that my position as heir presumptive to the Crown obliged her to treat me differently from my brothers and sisters, and that I could not be spoiled as they were by too much love and tenderness, that she had to bring me up in a Spartan manner; she used the word "Spartan." I failed to understand her remarks. I long sometimes so much for a little affection, and I would like my mother to give it to me. But when I told her so, she said that I belonged to the State, and that in regard to my education she had to conform to the instructions which the King chose to give her, that if she were free she would perhaps have acted differently, and then she added: "You cannot yet understand such things, Willy; come and give me a kiss, and let us forget all that." This conversation gave me a lot to think about. I begin to fear that my grandfather and my parents are not quite of the same opinion in regard to my education, and I wonder whose lead I ought to follow. My father is certainly very good, but then he does not care for the army; at least I think he doesn't, whilst grandfather thinks only of his soldiers. This appeals to me. I love soldiers, too. I don't think that a country can exist without soldiers; certainly not Prussia. I once said something of the kind to grandfather

who seemed awfully pleased at my remark, and replied that I was a true Hohenzollern. I liked that, I always like to be praised by grandfather. I love him, and then he is the King, and all that a soldier and an officer ought to care for is the approval of his King.

*Christmas Day, 1869.*

Last night we had our Christmas trees; first at home, where father and mother gave us their presents. I received the works of William Shakspeare which I had always longed for, but never had sufficient money to buy. Mother gave me a nice pony, and Charlotte also got one, which made her so happy that she simply shouted with delight. We sang some Christmas Carols, and father told us that when he was a boy he used to sing them too. *Our* tree was at four o'clock in the afternoon. At six we drove to my grandparents' palace, and the King and Queen took us into the ballroom where there was another beautiful tree loaded with pretty things. My gift was a collection of books dealing with military matters, and grandfather told me that though perhaps I would not be able to understand them at present, he wished to give me these volumes as a remembrance of him when he would no longer be

here. Among these books was the history of our last war against Austria three years ago, described by the General Staff under the supervision of General von Moltke; grandfather had written his own name on the first page, "Wilhelm Rex," and under it the words spoken by Frederick the Great after the battle of Mollwitz: "It is easy to win a victory if one is backed by a good army. The difficult thing is not to lose one's advantages." Grandfather in showing me the words said that he had had occasion to see for himself how true was this remark of our Great King, because certainly Napoleon had won immense victories, and yet he had lost all the advantages they had brought him, and died at St. Helena. I always love to listen to grandfather. Whenever I am with him I feel that he looks upon me as upon his successor, and that he would like to train me for the position. With my father it is entirely different, because he never seems to think that the day will come when I shall stand in his place. I wonder why it is so. Perhaps the reason of it lies in the fact that my father's position is, in a certain sense, the same as my own, whilst that of the King is so absolutely secure that he can afford to look down upon those who will follow him on the throne with pleasure and not with dread, as it seems

sometimes to me that father does when he thinks about me.

*May 27th, 1870.*

A great honour was conferred upon me to-day. I was allowed to march past the King with the First Regiment of Foot Guards, during the great Spring Review. It was the first time I was permitted to associate myself with my regiment in a public manner, and our Colonel himself watched me drilling and preparing for that event. Of course, the fact of my being the smallest officer in the ranks would, apart from my social status, have made me the cynosure of all eyes, so I tried to do my best, and to march as well as my comrades. And after the Review, when the King called together the officers to make his remarks on the manner it had proceeded, he said that he was very glad to see me appear for the first time in the ranks of his beloved Regiment, and that the latter, too, ought to remember that this was the first time in a good many years that a Prince standing in the direct line of succession to the throne, had had the opportunity to march in its midst and to perform his duties as one of its lieutenants. The soldiers cheered when they heard the King, and he seemed to like this, for he

smiled; but my father did not appear pleased and he remarked that these hurrahs were not seemly, because troops were not supposed to cheer any one but their Sovereign in his presence. Grandfather, however, pacified him by saying that he felt sure it was his words that had been cheered, and not the personality of "my dear grandson." Upon which my father said nothing, but all the same I could see that he was not pleased, and later on in the evening when we were home, I heard him remark to mother that, "the King ought not to make such a fuss about Willy, it puts ideas into the child's head which are neither wholesome nor good." Mother shrugged her shoulders, and merely replied that she thought I ought to be kept more strictly confined to the schoolroom and not be treated as if I were grown up. I do not like this, and I cannot understand why it is that my parents do not seem to agree with my grandfather in matters concerning my education. Surely his wishes ought to be respected. He is the King, and then his age makes him probably understand better than father and mother what will be required from me in the future. I believe that grandfather wants to train me as a future Sovereign ought to be trained, but that my parents would prefer to forget that such a destiny awaits me. I love father and mother, but not as I do



grandfather, who is always ready to sympathise with me, and who interests himself in everything I do.

*June 14th, 1870.*

To-day a little sister was born. Father showed her to us in the afternoon. Such a small baby, with a red face and dark hair. She is to be called Sophy. I am sorry not to have another brother instead of a sister, a brother with whom I could play in a year or two, whom I could toss about until he got frightened of me. It must be so nice to be able to frighten somebody. When I am grown up I mean to try it.

*July 15th, 1870.*

I have not written anything in my diary all these days. I have had to prepare for my examinations and have been kept hard at work. Then we were all so upset at home that I did not even think of writing. Yesterday France declared war upon us. It is a dreadful thing; at least so every one says, though I fail to see why people go about with red eyes and troubled countenances. What is there to be afraid of in war, especially for us Prussians who have always been prepared for it,

and whom war alone can help to acquire that rank among nations to which we are entitled, and about which old "Uncle Fritz" was always dreaming? We have been victorious in the two last wars which we have fought, and surely the decadent Frenchmen are not dangerous for us. They are a Godless nation, and as such they are bound to experience the wrath of our God, the German God under whose shield we are fighting. Father seems quite unhappy. When he came into mother's room after his first conversation with the King, immediately after the latter's return from Ems, he had a troubled face, and sat down near her writing table, shading his face with his hand, in an attitude of profound dejection. I would have liked to ask him what was the matter, but I did not dare, and mother too was weeping, and saying that it would be a dreadful thing, and that she did not know how she would be able to bear it. Then father noticed me in a corner of the room where I had retired (I forgot to say that I had come to wish mother good night just before father came in); he called me to him and told me that we were living in troubled times, and that I was old enough to realise it. I asked him then why he seemed so unhappy. "It is because I feel that nothing we can do can avert from us the curse of this war," replied father. "War

is a dreadful thing, and when one has once seen it, then one understands that no sacrifices ought to stand in the way of its avoidance. It is very well to talk of glory and of laurels, but what compensation can these offer to the tears that will flow, and to the miseries which are bound to fall on hundreds of thousands of human creatures in the next few weeks or months? I loathe war. Every right-minded Sovereign ought to loathe it; and yet it is my fate to become continually an actor in fierce and awful wars. I hope this curse will never fall to your portion, my son," added father with such emotion in his voice as I do not remember ever having seen him display. I tried, however, to put in a word. "But, Father," I said, "if we have war, it will not be our fault; we have attacked no one."

My mother then got up, and came towards me putting her hand upon my shoulder. "No, Willy," she said, "we have attacked no one, at least not outwardly, but I do not feel so sure that we have not managed matters so as to compel others to attack us, and this is what I think is so dreadful. What will happen now no one can foresee, and we may yet come to curse the day when we entered into this conflict."

"Mother," I replied, "you must not think such things. Remember that we are Prussians and

that we know how to perform our duty towards our country; we must, we *shall* be victorious."

"You are talking of what you cannot understand, Willy," interrupted my father, and then he continued, addressing my mother: "What makes me so unhappy is the thought that in a certain sense the responsibility for this conflict will rest upon me in history. I am the future Sovereign of this Realm; no one will believe that I have not been consulted in this hour of crisis."

"Rest easy as to that point, Fritz," exclaimed my mother, with an accent of terrible irony in her voice, "no one will ever dream of laying any responsibility upon you. People know but too well that you are nothing but a nonentity in this country, you are only a Crown Prince *de parade*."

I did not understand what she meant, but it seems to me that it could not have been anything nice, and when I am a man I do not mean to be a Crown Prince *de parade*, but to try and have a share in the government of this country. I would have liked to remain with my parents and hear more of what they had to say to each other. I was not allowed to do so, however, but was sent back to bed. I wish I were grown up and able to take part in this war. I think I shall ask

grandfather whether he cannot take me with him when he starts for the front.

*July 18th, 1870.*

I have had an opportunity to talk with grandfather. He himself wished to see me and my brothers and sister Charlotte. Vicky is still too small to be sent anywhere; she does nothing but scream when she is parted from mother or from her nurse. So we were brought to the small garden inside the Palace where the King and Queen generally partake of breakfast in spring, when they happen to be in Berlin. Grandfather was alone with a quantity of papers and maps spread out on a table before him. I went up to him with Henry, and he seemed to be very much moved at seeing us. He drew me near to him, setting me between his legs, and he told me that he wished to bid good-bye to us children before he left, and to do so quietly, not in the bustle of a station or before strangers. He told me never to forget these days and this time of trial the country is going through. I never feel afraid of grandfather, so I boldly asked him whether he would not take me with him, as I was so sorry to part from him, and would also so much like to see some real fighting, not the sham manœuvres

which we were allowed from time to time to witness in the neighbourhood of Potsdam. Grandfather did not rebuke me as my parents would have done. On the contrary, his face became quite serious as he replied: "I am not angry with you, my boy, for asking me such a thing. I was not much older than yourself when my father took me to headquarters, during our great struggle against Napoleon. But then those were other times, and at present the world requires its future rulers to be something more than fighters. You have a great future before you; you must study with that future in view. Remember that I was not like you, standing in the direct line of succession to the throne when I followed the late King to the army. Your parents would not like it if you were taken away from your studies at a time when you are just beginning to understand their seriousness. And I myself do not think it would be good for you at your age to see all the horrors connected with battle fields. But I am glad you made this request of me, it proves that you are a true Hohenzollern, always ready to fight and go ahead when the welfare of Prussia is concerned. You will make a good officer in time, and I feel proud of you."

And then grandfather did a thing he had never done before, he kissed me on the head with such

affection that I felt a lump in my throat. I bent down and kissed his hand and he reciprocated by patting me affectionately on the shoulder. But later on he spoke to the Queen about my request and his satisfaction at it, and she in her turn related it to my parents who were very angry with me for having preferred it. Mother in particular was quite furious. She asked me whether I knew that I had been guilty of an act of irreverence in regard to my father; I ought to have asked *him* to let me go to the army, and not the King. "You seem to think that it is your grandfather who is everything," she said. "He is the King, it is true, but he is not the master in this house, and so long as you are under our roof you must remember that you are to obey us, and no one else."

I did not reply because I know it is useless saying anything when mother is in such a mood, but it seems to me that she is wrong, because after all she is the King's subject just as much as myself, and his authority is paramount. When I am King I shall make it a point to show my family that such is the case, and that even in private matters they have to submit to me.

*July 29th, 1870.*

We have heard to-day from Munich where father arrived on the 27th to take over the command of the Bavarian troops. It seems that Cousin Louis was very strange in his behaviour to him, and did not seem as pleased as he ought to have been. Here grandfather had a great send-off, when the whole of the town turned out on the square opposite the Lehrte Station to greet him. There was tremendous enthusiasm, and even mother was moved by the shouts of the crowd. She walks about with such an unhappy face, and she does not seem to understand at all the greatness of the present moment. I know I am but a child, but yet I do feel it more than she appears to do. It was an imposing sight to watch the population of Berlin wish its King good-bye. There were a few old men who remembered the Napoleonic wars, and one of them screamed out: "Avenge Iéna!" Grandfather said nothing, but his eye kindled with a sudden flame, says the Queen, who was with him in the carriage in which he drove. And Uncle Frederick Charles, who was driving immediately behind it, and who also heard the man, screamed out to him: "We mean to, and we shall do it." I like that answer. It is a real Prussian one, and how I wish I could also take part in this revenge for the shame of Iéna,



for which we shall strive. I can so well understand General von Moltke who, when questioned as to whether he did not fear the coming struggle, replied that he did not, because Prussia was fully prepared for it, whilst he knew that such was not the case with France. My wonder is how, if this is the truth, the Emperor Napoleon ever had the courage to declare war on us. He must know that the loss of the campaign will mean for him the loss of his throne. For us it would not be the same thing, because in victory or in defeat, Prussia always remains faithful to its Kings.

*September 5th, 1870.*

The greatest events this century has seen have taken place during the last week. God has visibly been with us and has protected us all the time. We have won such a victory as no nation ever obtained before over a formidable foe, and this in a few days, one may almost say. How proud and thankful grandfather must be. And even my mother begins to lose that terribly sad expression which clouded her whole face since the departure of my father. She feels proud of him, as we all do. It seems that everybody is delighted with him and with the military talents which he has displayed. And Grandmother Victoria in Eng-

land has written to mother praising father for the tact which he displayed during the interview which he and the King had with the Emperor Napoleon after the victory of Sedan. The poor Emperor was quite broken-hearted, it seems, and I can well understand it, because it must have been a heart-rending thing for him to have lost his army, his crown, and the throne of his son. Those new dynasties have no backbone and they cannot stand storms as can older ones such as ours. I pleaded hard with mother to be allowed to go to Berlin on the night when the news of Sedan arrived, but she would not consent, saying that it was not good for me to see a crowd rejoicing over what must be such sorrow for another great nation. This is of course nothing but sentimentality. Every country ought to rejoice at the triumphs obtained by its army, and it is only affectation to pretend to be sorry for the troubles of the foes whom we have vanquished. I believe it is quite a false idea to show any mercy to one's enemies in times of war, and I think that Count von Bismarck was quite right when he said so. Since one must have enemies, the only thing left to do is to crush them so completely that they may never rise up again and try to harm one. But of course women cannot understand such

things, and therefore I must make allowances for mother.

*September 10th, 1870.*

I am very happy. Grandfather has written to me, the very first letter I have received from him in my life. It was a reply to congratulations which I sent to him after our great victory in Sedan. He says that he feels so thankful to God for having watched over us and allowed us to reap a reward for all our sacrifices. And he adds that now he will be able to die in peace, feeling secure that his inheritance will pass to his children and grandchildren, and that they will remember him all their lives. As if it was possible to forget grandfather! He is one of the greatest sovereigns Prussia has ever known, greater even than old Fritz. And what a life his has been! After Iéna, Sedan. I hope that we shall presently enter Paris. Grandfather deserves to live until this joy is granted to him. When I become King I shall strive to follow in the footsteps of grandfather, and I only hope I shall not be too old to do so when I ascend the throne. During my father's reign we shall never have a war, and it is to be feared that he will not know how to keep up the prestige of Prussia. He does not care for war,

and he refuses to acknowledge that there are times when it is a crime not to declare war on one's enemies. This is not the policy that a Prussian Monarch ought to pursue. Grandfather is different. He also would not declare war on a futile pretext, but his only thoughts are for the army, and he is a soldier before everything. I fear that father will try to be a politician rather than a soldier; and mamma does not understand that outside of militarism there is no salvation. I often wonder how it came about that grandfather did not try to marry father to a German Princess, and that he did not object to his marrying a foreigner. I love mamma, but it seems to me that she does not quite understand her position. She is ambitious, but not in the military sense of the word; and yet it is militarism which has made of Prussia the great nation she is to-day. I am proud to be a Prussian, and proud to be a Hohenzollern. It is far better than being a Hapsburg.

*September 15th, 1870.*

There has been a quarrel between grandfather and the Queen. The latter, when she heard that the Emperor Napoleon was to be interned in Wilhelmshöhe near Cassel, immediately set herself to

have the castle arranged in the most comfortable way possible for him! She sent one of her two French valets and one French cook to wait upon him, and she had several Napoleonic relics which she possessed despatched to the castle to ornament the rooms which the Emperor (our prisoner) will occupy; among others a portrait of his mother, Queen Hortense. She expressed a wish to go herself to receive him on his arrival and to see to his wants. Grandfather, at first, had no objection to this scheme, as he also would like to see our prisoner treated as well as possible, but Count von Bismarck would not hear of it and declared that a Queen of Prussia ought to have more respect for her dignity than to compromise it by seeming to apologise for anything her consort had done. Of course it was his advice that prevailed, and grandfather telegraphed to the Queen asking her not to go to Cassel, but to confine herself to seeing after the comforts of Napoleon from afar. Grandmother was very angry. She came one afternoon to see mother and told her all about it, when to my surprise mamma seemed to be of the same opinion as Count von Bismarck, and among other things told the Queen that if she had gone to Cassel people would have said that it was a kind of triumph she had worked for, and that all she wished

was to gloat over the prisoner's misfortunes and misery. The Queen had never thought such an interpretation might be put on her actions, and she admitted that the King was right; nevertheless she could not bring herself to forgive Count von Bismarck for having dared to oppose anything she had planned to do. The Queen dislikes the Count, and my mother also does not care for him. I like him, though, and when I am grown up I shall certainly, if he is still a Minister, consult him in many things. He is such a Prussian, and he cares so much for the greatness of Prussia.

*October 16th, 1870.*

The day before yesterday was again a great one in this war. Metz has fallen, and Uncle Frederick Charles has added to his laurels by obliging Bazaine to capitulate and to surrender, with his whole army. I suppose this means the end of the war. I should feel sorry were this the case, because then we could not occupy Paris, and I am sure that the Prussian people want to take that town. Paris means France for them, and they feel that until Paris is ours we shall not have conquered France. In the meantime father and the King are at Versailles. Father writes that it impressed him much to come there as a conqueror

and to find one of our hospitals established in the old Palace built by Louis XIV. He seems to think that it is a desecration for it to be occupied by the enemy. I cannot understand his feeling. In his place I think that I should be delighted to have entered as if it had been mine by right and, thanks to my sword, an old place which had been the stronghold of the enemies of my people and of my race. I am so sorry, but it appears to me that I can never agree with my parents. I suppose it is because I belong to another generation. And yet with grandfather I get on well. He understands me and I understand him. He is so good, so kind, and with it all there is no sentimentality, whereas father and mother are nothing but one mass of sentiment, which they carry into everything, even where sentiment should not exist. I wish I were grown up and could claim the right to express my own opinions.

*January 20th, 1871.*

Germany has an Emperor. Grandfather was proclaimed Kaiser at Versailles on the day before yesterday. God has visibly watched over our Royal House and helped it to fulfil its destiny. The whole of Berlin is wild with delight. On the evening of that same day, the Queen and

mother went together to the theatre and were greeted with hurrahs such as they had never heard before. All the streets were illuminated, and we were allowed to drive in them until a late hour in the night. Wherever we were recognised the population stopped our carriage and screamed "Hurrah!" It is indeed a great thing that has happened. Until to-day Prussia was considered one of the minor European states. Now it has become the first power in Germany, and it will not be long before it becomes the first one in the world. I feel so happy and so proud to think that I will one day reap the benefit of all the great things which have been performed by grandfather and his ministers. And yet it seems that father did not like what has taken place, or at least that he would have wished it to happen otherwise; and grandfather, too, refused at first to accept this crown which at last we have wrested out of the hands of the Hapsburgs. Grandfather does not care for this title of Emperor, and thinks that the dignity of King of Prussia, which he inherited from his ancestors, is far greater than this new one, for he will not own that the Empire that came to life two days ago is the continuation of the old one, which in the past made Germany so great. The Queen also is furious, but then she is always furious whenever anything happens



before she has been consulted as to its desirability. Mother says nothing. She seems awed by the greatness of all that has taken place. Sometimes I am afraid that all the dignities which we Hohenzollerns may acquire will leave mother quite indifferent. She is so deeply convinced of the greatness of her position as the Princess Royal of England, that she thinks nothing can surpass it, and whether she be the Crown Princess of Prussia or the German Crown Princess, with the prospects of an Imperial diadem in the future, it is all the same to her. This is wrong, I will even say *very* wrong, but of course for the present I must keep this opinion to myself, because to mention it would only cause trouble. I am now expecting every day the news that Paris has fallen. It seems that the town is at last being bombarded. They ought to have begun doing it long ago, but then both the Queen and my mother have been writing letters upon letters to the Emperor, urging him not to allow such an act of barbarism. As if there could be any question of barbarism in war! It is quite ridiculous to say such a thing. Did the French object to being called barbarians when they sacked the Palatinate under Louis XIV.? No, they simply burned and pillaged and murdered, and so must we burn and pillage and kill, so as to bring the struggle to an end as soon

as possible, and the sooner we strike terror into the hearts of Frenchmen the better it will be for us. There can be no mercy in war. This I heard General von Moltke say one day to father when they were discussing military questions, and he was quite right. The General knows what he is about, and ought to be allowed to manage his own business. In war times the military are the only people who ought to be listened to.

*February 1st, 1871.*

Paris has fallen and peace preliminaries are being discussed. This is a great event indeed, and once more we ought to thank God who has blessed us with such great victories. We attended a service of thanksgiving in the Dome Church, and Pastor Kögel preached a beautiful sermon in which he told us that it was not our merits, but the power of God, that had enabled us to cover ourselves with such glory. He reminded us that we ought never to forget that German God who so visibly had stood upon our side during all the great struggle that had just come to an end, and he expressed the hope that we should know how to reap the benefits of these victories. Mother said afterwards that these remarks were most tactless, and the Queen also was quite

displeased with them, as she declared that they savoured of insolence. I cannot understand this. Why is it insolent to feel proud at the good things that one has won, and why is it tactless to rejoice at the defeat of one's enemies? When I shall have an establishment of my own, I shall ask Pastor Kögel to preach to me and to my household every Sunday.

*March 22nd, 1871.*

This is grandfather's seventy-fourth birthday. It was celebrated in a solemn manner, and all the German Princes, with the exception of the Kings of Bavaria and Wurtemberg, came to Berlin for the occasion. Grandfather had returned here immediately after the preliminaries of the treaty of peace had been signed, accompanied by my father and by the other members of the Royal Family, but he had forbidden any public reception being accorded him, because he declared that this ought to be tendered to his troops who had won this war and not to him, and that he would accept it only on the day when he would march into the capital at the head of these troops. But the Queen and mother went to the station to greet him. Of course there was an immense crowd gathered to see its Emperor, and there were ac-

clamations all the way from the Lehrte Station down to the Palace, as the carriage containing grandfather and the Empress passed through the streets black with people. Father drove directly to our own Palace where he asked to see us children. I had greeted him with Henry at the station, but Waldy and our sisters had not been allowed to come, and great was their joy when they saw father again. My mother was so happy that she laughed and cried at the same time. It was indeed a great day, and we were all so thankful to God for having allowed father to return to us in good health and also for having watched over our armies. No one thought that we would beat the French whose army had such a great reputation. But it seems that, with all their boasting, they were not at all prepared for this war, and of course we were. We have a Moltke, a Bismarck, a Roon, and other great men who understand that a nation, if it wants to prosper, ought always to be prepared for war, and to be thinking of war. I know that it would make father angry to read this. He hates to find people thinking of war. In that respect he is not a bit like the Hohenzollerns, and I believe that if only a peace congress were held anywhere, and if he could attend it, he would make speeches without number in favour of everlasting peace. I am not

like that at all. I think that peace, if it lasted forever, would entirely destroy in nations those virile qualities that are indispensable if they wish to make progress in the world.

Of course I was not present at any of the receptions which took place at the Castle in honour of grandfather's birthday, but I hear that he made a most beautiful speech in reply to the congratulations of his generals. Earlier, at eight in the morning, I had been to see him with my brothers and sisters, and I had told him that I felt more sorry than ever not to have been with him at Versailles during that wonderful campaign. The old Emperor (for such we must call him, I suppose, though he still prefers to be addressed as the King) appeared very much touched by my words and said that he also was sorry I had not been able to see how well our troops fought.

"Perhaps you may yet have this spectacle, my boy," he added, "you are young and may see another war, though I am sure I hope not for your own sake. The one thing, however, which I can promise you is that there shall not be another war so long as I am alive. I have had enough of blood; I wish to end my days peacefully."

I can very well understand grandfather's feelings, but when I shall be in his place, I shall of

course not have the same scruples. I think that my military tutor was quite right when he explained to us the other day during a lesson which he was giving to my brother Henry and myself, that great as this war had been, and gloriously as it had ended for us, yet it had not accomplished the aim that Prussia had always had in view—it had not completely secured her superiority and her rule over the rest of Europe. The German race is the first in the world and it must one day take the lead. Probably this right will be contested, and so Germany must fight again until at last she will have overcome all possible opposition. I liked this lesson because it seemed to open new horizons to my mind. It made me see that great as had been the work performed by grandfather, there was still something left for me to do before the supreme aim of the ambitions of our House could be attained. It is very well to have conquered and beaten France, but there are other countries besides France with whom we have not yet measured our forces. There is Russia, there is Turkey, and there is England. The latter probably will never consent to play second fiddle to us. She thinks she is the greatest nation in the world, just as mamma believes that English Princesses are superior to any others in Europe.

*June 17th, 1871.*

Yesterday was one of the most glorious days that our Monarchy and our country has ever seen. Our victorious troops entered Berlin, back from the campaign during which they distinguished themselves in such a wonderful manner. We all went to see the show. The Empress; mother, with us children, and all the other Royal Princesses, had seats in a tribune erected on the Pariser Platz, and the Emperor himself led his faithful army back to his capital. He was riding a beautiful brown charger, with the Field Marshal's staff in his hand, and he looked magnificent, so dignified and so kingly. Behind him came father and Uncle Frederick Charles, also in Field Marshal's uniforms with their staffs, and then Bismarck, and Moltke, and old Manteuffel of whom my parents are so fond. People cheered, women wept, and the population filled the streets, which rang with hurrahs and exclamations of joy. All the sorrow, all the mourning under which so many families had been weighed down, were forgotten in this memorable hour. Even the sight of the First Regiment of Dragoons of the Guard, all the officers of which had been appointed during the war, and which was now almost entirely composed of new faces, failed to remind one of the bloody battles during which this

particular regiment had been so decimated that the King, when he inspected it again after the charge of Mars La Tour, could not restrain his tears. He was always very fond of it and it cut him to the heart to find it had been almost annihilated. But then the terrible sacrifice had done its work, and the advancing French columns had been kept back long enough by our heroic cavalry to allow the reinforcements which were coming up to enter into the conflict with their fresh strength. Father wrote to mother about this cavalry charge. It seems that General von Brandenburg, when ordered by General von Pape to lead his brigade against the enemy, told him that he would obey, but that it was sending all these men to a certain death, as the French would surely mow them down with their rifles and artillery. Von Pape simply replied that the cost of maintenance of the cavalry in peace times justified its sacrifice when necessary. Upon this General von Brandenburg dropped his sword back into its scabbard and led his brigade, without even attempting to defend himself, so convinced was he that he was going to instant death. By some miracle he came through entirely unscathed, though only one of the officers who had taken part in the attack remained alive and unwounded, only to be killed, however, three days later. Mother thought that the remark



of General von Pape was most unfeeling, but I cannot agree with her there. There can be no question of feelings in war time. All that must be looked after is that the army does its duty. The rest does not matter, and human life ought not to be taken into consideration in such grave moments. Besides, can there be a more glorious death than to fall on the field of honour for one's King and one's country? I am sure that I could wish for nothing better, but then as a rule Prussian Princes are never sent where they can be killed, and poor Prince Louis Ferdinand who perished during the Napoleonic wars was an exception. All the same, I admire these brave dragoons who behaved so heroically, though I should not have wept as did grandpapa. It is never right that a man (especially a King) should shed tears.

But I must now go on with the description of the entry of our troops into Berlin. People said that father was the most beautiful and striking figure in the whole procession and that he looked like the real Knight of Lohengrin. I do not like this comparison. Lohengrin was quite in place in the romantic middle ages. At present it certainly would not do to go looking about for injustices to repair or to redress. The world has become harder and more

practical, and a King of Prussia has other things to do than to play the Knight. If I were father and had heard myself compared to Lohengrin I should not have liked it.

Nevertheless father was tremendously cheered, and the people kept shouting: "There comes our Fritz, look at our Fritz." Father's face beamed, but mother began crying, I suppose it was for joy, and these tears impressed me, because mother is not one who shows generally what she feels.

The troops marched past us in the Pariser Platz quite slowly, and, though it was very hot, the people remained all the time with their heads uncovered, and the women without their sunshades. But the great interest of the whole ceremony was gone after the King with his staff had disappeared down the Linden Avenue. One felt so well that it was the King who was the centre of all eyes; the King, or rather the Emperor, re-entering his capital with this new dignity which he had won at the point of his sword. Of course the soldiers were beautiful to gaze upon; they all seemed happy and fit, but still the culminating point of the whole pageant consisted in the appearance of the Sovereign with his son, relatives and generals surrounding him, and the crowds felt this too, because, not only did they shout their hurrahs, but they kept throwing flowers at grand-

father until he was almost smothered under them. Bismarck also came in for his share in the ovations. He looked superb in a cuirassier uniform, riding a big bay horse as large as himself, and he gazed with such proud eyes on all the people. No one, of course, ever remembered anything of the kind in Berlin, such as this triumphant entry of our victorious army. It made me regret again that I was not allowed to accompany grandfather to France. If I had gone, most probably I would have figured in to-day's procession. I can ride very well, and I would have looked quite at my ease behind grandfather. Perhaps the day will come when I shall also lead a triumphant army back into Berlin. One never knows what may happen, and until now there have been but few Prussian Kings whose reigns have passed without their having been called to command an army in the field. I would not care to lose a war. It must be a dreadful feeling. And I am sure that if (or rather *when*) I am a King I shall apply myself just as carefully as grandfather has done to keep up the martial spirit of our army, and to train it in view of every eventuality. This war has put us so much to the front that we are sure to have at present far more enemies than was the case one year ago. They may one day attack us, and it is

against such an eventuality that our army must be prepared. Our splendid, wonderful, admirable army! How thankful we must feel towards it, and towards God, who has so visibly protected us against our fierce adversaries! I have often thought of the Emperor Napoleon; how terrible it must have been for him to find himself a prisoner of the Sovereign whom he had received and welcomed in his capital three years before. And how triumphant grandfather must have felt to see this mighty monarch humbled at last! At least I would have felt triumphant in his place, but it seems that both grandfather and father were quite unhappy and miserable at having to meet the Emperor in such different circumstances and surroundings from those in which they had last seen him. I think this very strange. In their place I should only have been proud.

*July 1st, 1874.*

I was fifteen on my last birthday, and heard that the Emperor had at last yielded to the desire of my parents, that I should enter a public school, together with my brother Henry, which up to now no Prussian Prince had ever done. I am to go in the autumn to the Royal Gymnasium in Cassel, because Prince von Bismarck, when

consulted as to the desire of my parents, objected to my being sent to a school in Berlin, which, he considered, would be inconvenient. I must say I am not sorry to be sent to Cassel. I think that I shall be more free when no longer in the house of my parents, who always look upon me as a child. And I feel myself that it will be good for me to go to a public school and mix with other people. Up to now I have always been surrounded by the same persons, and hardly ever had an opportunity to learn what was really going on in the world. This puts me at a disadvantage, because it gives me one-sided ideas and opinions, and I think that father and mother are quite right to wish me to mix with the public, and to see how persons are made who are not princes of the Royal blood.

Hinzpeter is to go with my brother and myself to Cassel, and I believe that we are to be allowed to visit the families of our professors and a few military notabilities of the town. Of course our military tutor will also accompany us, and I am to go on with my drilling and training, whilst Henry is to study for the navy, for which he is destined. We are to begin our studies next September, when the schools reopen for the winter term, and in the meanwhile I am to go on with my lessons here, grandfather having insisted that

Captain von Hindenburg, among others, should come over to Potsdam from Berlin, to instruct me in military matters, and in particular to make me follow a course of military history from the time of the Great Frederick and the Seven Years' War, down to the campaigns that have been fought during the last ten years. The Emperor is very keen about this last point, and he has every confidence in Captain von Hindenburg, who is considered one of our best Staff officers, and who has been working under the direction of Count von Moltke on the History of the War of 1870 with France, which is to be published in a year or two.

*August 18th, 1874.*

To-day I had my last lesson of military history with Captain von Hindenburg. It was a most interesting one. This being the anniversary of the battle of Gravelotte, he took the opportunity to point out to me the moral of the great struggle which we had with France, and told me, among other things, that I ought never to forget that it was the Prussian army which saved the Prussian dynasty on many a battle field, and that therefore we Kings of Prussia ought always to put the welfare of this army before every-

thing else in the world. It was trained in ideas of the strictest obedience to its Sovereigns. On the other hand, we ought to remember that it was our duty to shield this army from the attacks of certain people always eager to criticise this military spirit which has made us a great nation; to see to its wants, and also to give it the opportunity to distinguish itself in the future as it has done in the past. "The army is always eager to show the stuff it is made of," said the Captain, "and it would be unfair and dangerous not to satisfy its legitimate ambitions in this direction. Without their army, the Hohenzollerns could never have obtained the Imperial Crown which is theirs to-day. It has become, therefore, their duty to give to those faithful troops the satisfaction which they claim. They are the best servants the Crown has in this country. On the other hand, the Kings of Prussia ought always to keep in mind the fact that they are also the servants of their army in a certain sense, and that they must minister to its wants."

The Captain then proceeded to explain to me the details of this wonderful battle of Gravelotte, where in particular my Regiment, the First one of Foot Guards, distinguished itself so brilliantly. It seems that during a few moments the fate of the war hung in the balance, because if we had

been repulsed on that day, things would have indeed been very black for us. I asked him if he thought that we had beaten the French so completely that they would not be enabled to attack us again, at least for a good many years. "I wish I could think that such is the case," replied von Hindenburg, "but I fear that we have been far too moderate in the conditions which we have imposed. We ought to have taken Belfort, and especially the North Provinces of France, with Calais as a base. Then we would indeed have been able to laugh at our enemies, because the English Channel would have been entirely under our control. And in the end it would have been the same, because Frenchmen will never understand our generosity, and they will hate us just as much for the loss of Alsace-Lorraine as they would have done had we insisted upon annexing Belfort and Calais. It is always ridiculous to handle one's enemies with kid gloves."

I liked this explanation more than I like the Captain, who is not sympathetic to me. He has very overbearing manners, and it seems to me that sometimes he forgets the difference in rank which divides us. My father says that it is a defect of mine to be always thinking of my position in the world. But he forgets that pride in being an Hohenzollern has always been the dom-



inant factor in the character of the Princes belonging to our House, with the exception of himself. Father and mother are always thinking of the value of individual character. This is a very good thing when applied to ordinary mortals, but people placed in very high and responsible positions ought not to be judged according to the same moral standard as the generality of mankind. They cannot be governed by the same rules. When I become King I shall apply myself to do whatever is best for my people and for my army, regardless of consequences. Humanity ought not to count with Sovereigns; they ought to think only of their own country, and work for its prosperity, even if by doing so they cause misery and suffering. I have thought a great deal about these things during the last year. I am no longer a child. In three years' time I shall be of age; then, according to the rules of our House, I shall be put in possession of an establishment of my own, and provided with a real commission in the Army. How happy I shall feel then, how very happy!

*September 4th, 1874.*

To-morrow I am leaving for Cassel. Grandfather insisted on my being here for the glorious

anniversary of the 2d of September. There was of course, as usual every year, a great Review of the troops composing the Berlin garrison on the Tempelhofer Feld, and of those of Potsdam in the quadrangle stretching before the Town Castle. In the latter parade, I marched again with my Regiment, the First Foot Guards, as the youngest officer in the First Company. I could see how grandfather watched me, and how he followed with affectionate eyes every one of my movements. But my Colonel was not so satisfied, because he told me that I had not kept my eyes riveted with sufficient attention on the King as we were marching past him, and that I had not held my sword firmly enough. I was very unhappy on hearing these remarks, and wished to know whether I had really done so badly; so I asked grandfather straight out whether my Colonel was right or not. "An officer's superior is always right," replied the King, "and any remarks that he makes must be accepted and listened to with respect. But I did not notice that you did not pay sufficient attention to me, and I am quite pleased with you, considering the fact that, after all, you are not yet a real officer."

This comforted me a little, though I felt hurt at being called "not yet a real officer." I do wish I were quite grown up and independent, able to

prove that I can perform the duties expected from a Prussian officer, and drill my men well.

*Cassel, September 10th, 1874.*

We have been here for three days. I am quite pleased with my surroundings. The departure from Berlin was a very sad and solemn one. We went to take leave of the King at Babelsberg, and he was as usual most kind to both my brother and myself. He recommended me, in particular, to study with zeal and to prepare myself for the duties I would be expected to fulfil in a few years. My father was also good and tender to me, and mother seemed pleased that at last she had been allowed to have her own way. Her brothers studied at public schools, and the Prince of Wales was for some time at an English University. My own father, too, studied at Bonn, where it is probable that I will also go one day, after I have finished my gymnasium and have been confirmed. I found here, to my surprise, that special care was to be given to my religious instruction. Pastor K—— from the principal Lutheran Church in Cassel comes three times a week to teach my brother and myself the principal dogmas of our faith. This is by my grandfather's special wish. He knows Pas-

tor K—— very well, and he desired that our religious training should be left in his hands. The pastor is a man of high character, and, though he seems severe, yet it is obvious that he throws all his heart into his work. He told me to remember that I (more than others whose position is not so high as that which I am destined to occupy) ought to keep firm my faith in God who alone can help me later on to fulfil my duties towards my people. Germans, and Prussians especially, have been, ever since our glorious Reformation, the staunchest supporters of the Protestant doctrine, and I ought never to forget that the Hohenzollerns are the greatest Protestant dynasty in Europe. It is since our ancestors went over to Lutheranism that Prussia's greatness began, and the pastor recommended me above all things to preserve intact the purity of my Faith, because I would find in it all possible consolations and encouragements in the difficulties of my life. He is convinced that God, our German God, has continually watched over us, and presided at all the victories which we have gained over our enemies. He implored me to look upon life as a serious thing that ought to be accepted seriously. I have a great future before me, and I ought to bear in mind that later on I may be called upon to consolidate the work

begun by my ancestors and continued by my grandfather; a work which is not yet completed, and which requires still great efforts on my part and on that of our whole German nation before it is finally concluded, and the supremacy of our Teuton race established in such a way that nothing can shake it and nobody can dispute it. I fear that I had not sufficiently thought of all these things before. I see now that my whole life ought to be one of self-abnegation, and must be imbued with a spirit of self-sacrifice for the good of my future subjects. I begin to see why my parents thought it necessary to send me here, and I am grateful to them. I feel sure that no one in Berlin would have told me the things which I have heard since I have been in Cassel.

*January 5th, 1875.*

I have been in Berlin for the Christmas holidays. Strange to say, those weeks of vacation did not leave upon my mind the impression of enjoyment which I expected they would. I missed Cassel, my studies there, and felt again a child under my parents' roof, a feeling which I had entirely lost since I began to attend a public school. In a few days I shall be sixteen. At my age grandfather was already fighting at the side

of King Frederick William III., and no one thought of him as of a child. With me it is different. Neither my father nor my mother seems to consider it necessary to allow me any independence, and mother continually says to me: "You must not do this; you must not say this; pick up this handkerchief; go and see why the carriage is not ready," and so on.

I hate that kind of thing. I think that no Prince of Prussia ought to be ordered about in that way, and mother ought to remember that I shall be her King one day, and that it does not do to speak to me as if I were a baby. She can do such things with Waldy and Charlotte and Vicky, but not with me. Mother has always in mind her own education, but she forgets that Queen Victoria was a reigning Sovereign, who had the right to treat her children in an authoritative manner, whereas with myself it is quite another thing. I shall be Emperor one day, and my mother, if she is alive then, will be my subject. I wonder whether she ever gives this fact a thought. In general, I was not happy in Berlin at all, and when grandfather asked me whether I would not like to stay at home until my own birthday, the 27th of this month, I replied that I thought it better not, because it would keep me away for too long a time from my studies, and

that this might make it difficult for me to catch up with my comrades. Grandfather seemed pleased at this reply of mine, and told me that it was worthy of a Hohenzollern, and that he liked to find that I was ready to sacrifice pleasure to duty as my forefather had done in ages gone by. But I fail to see why grandfather should think it is such a pleasure to me to be in Berlin. To tell the truth, I like Cassel ever so much better. There I know I am the chief personage; though people are told to treat me just as if I were an ordinary mortal, they are all the time conscious that it is their future King who is among them, and their manner to me is always full of deference. In Berlin I am nobody, because no one minds little Prince Wilhelm, as they call me. The hopes of everybody are concentrated on my father and mother, and their partisans seem to think that when father comes to the throne quite a different course of politics will be inaugurated. The only personage whose attitude in regard to me pleased me much is Prince Bismarck. I was told to go and call upon him and offer him my good wishes for Christmas and the New Year, and he received me with a respect I am not used to find among the other ministers and advisers of my grandfather or of my parents. He asked me into his study, and there questioned me as to my

occupations in Cassel, adding that he was very glad I liked my new surroundings, and that if he were consulted as to the future course of my education he should recommend I go to a university, because it is most essential for a future King of Prussia to become imbued with the atmosphere that presides amid intellectual circles in Germany and to see for himself what are the leanings of the nation. The spirit of comradeship which is to be found among the students, added the Prince, is in a certain way the same as that which exists in the army. It is distinctive of the German mind and of the German character, and of course a future Emperor ought to be German before everything else. Prince Bismarck is the first person who has called me to my face a future Emperor, and somehow his acceptance of this fact has suddenly made me seem more important in my own eyes than I was before. He is really a very great man, and I hope that I shall see him often in the future. I shall be glad to have the advice of his experience, and I hope that for the sake of our beloved Fatherland he may live a long time. He is also a deeply religious man, one who knows that without God's help we can do nothing in this world. I had heard already that he reads a chapter of the Bible every day, and I can quite believe this. I under-



stand so well his craving for this wonderful book, especially the Old Testament, in which are related all the promises which the Almighty has made to His people, provided they remain true to Him. We Germans have also been promised much, and I hope that we shall remain faithful to the resolutions which we make, never to forsake the Lord. I fear that very few in these days lay sufficient stress on the necessity for every human being, man or woman, to have religious faith in the mercies of God and in a future life. This existence of ours must not be looked upon lightly. It is a grave thing, I almost wrote a solemn thing; and really great men understand this.

*January 20th, 1877.*

In a few days I shall be eighteen years old, and of age. I finished my course of studies at Cassel just before Christmas, when I parted from my brother Henry, who goes on a journey round the world as a midshipman on a man-of-war. This makes my mother very unhappy, as it will be four years before he can come back. Both my parents went to Kiel to see him off and wish him Godspeed. I returned here to Berlin with them and found that I had been given different rooms in the Kronprinzen Palace, and that my

new apartments were arranged in view of letting me have more independence than what I was allowed before. I was also informed that I would be given, after my majority, a military aide-de-camp, Captain von Lyncker, who would accompany me to Bonn, where it is quite settled I shall study for two years, after which I shall begin my military service in a cavalry regiment, probably that of the Hussars of the Guard. This is grandfather's special wish, and for once the Queen is also of the same opinion. My parents would have preferred my being sent to the University of Tübingen, because the religious opinions professed there agree more with their own, and especially with those of my mother. But the Emperor preferred Bonn, where my father also studied, and which is close to Baden, where Aunt Louise lives and where the Emperor himself spends some weeks every year; also to Coblenz, where grandmother lives in summer. It seems, too, that there is plenty of society in Bonn, and it is considered desirable I should see something of society, and mix with people, previous to my marriage. All the family want me to marry young, so as to secure the succession in the direct line. I wonder whether I shall like Bonn. I am to go there the first week of next month. In the meantime I was allowed for the first time to be

present yesterday at the Ordensfest, before which grandfather held a chapter of the Order of the Black Eagle, during which I was invested with its ribbon and star. My father and Uncle Charles led me into the room, where the Emperor sat upon the throne, and we all wore the mantles belonging to the Order. Grandfather made a speech, in which he drew my attention to the oath which I had taken as member of the highest Prussian Order, and he urged me never to do anything that might bring discredit upon it. I am sure that I never shall. It seems to me that no one in my family, not even the King, thinks that I am determined to conduct myself as a worthy descendant of the Hohenzollerns, and to keep high the flag of our family traditions. My age has nothing to do with this. Though I am but eighteen, I think that I understand very well the nature of the duties which stare me in the face and, with God's help, I mean to fulfil them.

Since I arrived in Berlin I have met a few of the young men of my age with whom I played when we were children. I didn't like any of them. They seemed to be thousands of miles apart from me. They all think of their pleasure, of the time when they shall be officers, which will be in a few months, and when they will be able to do what they like: to gamble, go to races,

drink, amuse themselves with women of the lower class, or carry on intrigues with ladies of society. All this disgusts me. Women do not attract me, except as a passing distraction, the pleasure of the moment. I may fall in love, of course, but I am quite sure that I shall never follow the example of my ancestor King Frederick William II., who forgot everything else whenever he saw a pretty face. Since I know what love means in its abstract, physical sense, I accept it as a necessary thing, but I should feel ashamed if I allowed it to become the principal thing in my life when I am a King. And I do not think that I could ever be so devoted to my wife as my father is to my mother. Romance is not in my line, or, rather, I will not have it engross me to the detriment of other things. It is perhaps on that account that I find so little pleasure in being in the society of these boys who were my comrades before I went to Cassel, and who seem to me not to have one single serious idea in their heads. I much prefer talking with the masters who taught me before I entered the Gymnasium of Cassel. The other day I asked after Captain von Hindenburg. He has left the General Staff, and commands a company in the Third Regiment of Foot Guards, where he began his military service. I sent for him one afternoon, and we

had a long conversation together, when he explained to me again certain military matters the signification of which I had not grasped so far. He is an exceedingly clever man, but my first impression persists, and I do not like him, in spite of the fact that he is the most perfect personification of the Prussian officer, such as he ought to be, that I have ever seen. For one thing, he affects towards me a patronising attitude which jars upon my nerves. And yet I know that whenever I have spoken with him it has been for my advantage, and that I have always learned something from him. I wonder whether this will always be so.

This morning Captain von Lyncker, who is to enter upon his duties as my personal aide-de-camp on the day when I shall complete my eighteenth year—that is, on the 27th of this month—presented himself to me previous to beginning his service. I like him very much indeed. He seems to be a tactful man, and to realise that his position is bound to be a difficult one, because, though he is styled my aide-de-camp, yet in reality he is something of a tutor, and has been told to watch me, and to report on all that I am doing at Bonn. I wonder whether he will take his task in earnest, or whether he will attach himself to me in view of the future and take my

interests sufficiently to heart to try to guide me without being disagreeable to me.

*February 6th, 1877.*

I arrived here on the 1st of this month, and I am to be back in Berlin for the 22d of March, when grandfather will be eighty years old, and when there will be a great assemblage of German Princes to wish him all kinds of good things. In the meanwhile I am trying to get used to Bonn, which at first I did not like so well as Cassel. It is quite a different life that I am leading here; I study far less and see far more of the world. I have met some young men whom I like very much indeed, and the fact that for the first time in my life I go about without an official tutor following me, and that Hinzpeter is no longer at my heels, gives me a feeling of independence which I like and appreciate, though it leaves some empty hours at my disposal that hang on my hands. This does not mean that I did not like Hinzpeter; quite the contrary. I liked him exceedingly, and I miss his conversations, for which his letters are not a sufficient compensation. But during the last year he quarrelled with my mother, and she was the one who put forward the plea that I was too old to have a tutor and that it was

more seemly for me to have a military attendant. She was exceedingly cold to Hinzpeter when he asked to say good-bye to her, and told him that though she appreciated very much the care which he had taken of my education and that of my brother, she thought he had not quite conformed to her views in the matter of my training. Poor Hinzpeter did not like this remark at all!

*April 20th, 1877.*

I begin to like Bonn very much. I have become acquainted with the principal professors of the university and from my intercourse with them I have learned a great deal. To a certain extent I have formed opinions as to politics and religion which I hope will sustain me through life. I went to Berlin for grandfather's birthday, and my stay there lasted longer than I expected, because my parents would not let me return to Bonn before my Confirmation, which took place in the chapel of the Castle together with that of my sister Charlotte. My father thought that I could better prepare myself for this important event at home than in Bonn, where necessarily I would have more opportunities to meet people, and to have my attention distracted by other subjects from this important one of my profession of the

Protestant faith. Pastor Kögel came every day to the Kronprinzen Palais to give lessons to Charlotte and myself, and he impressed upon us the necessity of living up to the expectations which the Prussian nation indulged in in regard to us. For me, in particular, my Confirmation means a great deal. For one thing, I shall no longer be considered a mere boy after it has taken place, and for another it will stimulate my zeal for the duties which stare me in the face. I made some resolutions on that day. The first is to dedicate all my energy and all my strength to the welfare of my country, and to try to lead our glorious Fatherland to prosperity, success, and further greatness. The second is always to look at the serious side of life, and never to allow my personal passion, likes or dislikes to rule me, except in cases when these will have anything to do with the grandeur of Germany. My grandfather thinks far more of his title and of his dignity as King of Prussia than of those of a German Emperor. It may be well for him to do so, because he has been bred in traditions which I have not known; but for me it will be necessary to put the position of German Emperor before that of any other, even before that of King of Prussia. An Emperor has the right to command other crowned heads. He can take up a ruling attitude



over the other Sovereigns who recognise him as their chief. The time has passed when little kingdoms and small nations can claim to have their rights respected by those who are stronger than they. To-day it is the mailed fist alone that makes any impression. One has only to remember how Napoleon made and unmade Kings at his will, and how he laid the burden of his hand and of his might all over Europe. Germany has at last entered into the sphere of action for which she was destined. My grandfather is quite right when he says that he believes intensely in the "God of battle fighting on our (the Prussians') side." He was also right—and this proves how his political instinct served him well—to believe in the ultimate union of Germany at a time and through years when it seemed it never could be attained, and to feel convinced that the destiny of Prussia was to become the instrument of this union. But now we must consolidate the work done by him and by the great men with whom he contrived to surround himself. This will not be such an easy task, and I realise very well that heavy responsibilities will fall upon my shoulders when I shall have ascended the Throne. I have been discussing this subject with several professors of our university here, and they have all told me that my future work ought to be to fa-

your German expansion in the world. After all that we have done it is not enough that Berlin has become the centre of the European system. We must insist upon the creation of another and newer Germany, which will claim that her voice shall be heard in all political affairs, no matter in what quarter of the globe they may arise. The aim of the Hohenzollerns has always been a world-wide dominion, and this aim has been shared by the whole German nation, not only by Prussia, and it has drawn together the dynasty and the people, until one has become inseparable from the other. We must remember that our successes have won for us enemies without number among all those whom jealousy prevents from judging us with fairness and impartiality. The greatness of our German Kultur is not appreciated anywhere, and yet it ought to be our care to impose it not only upon Europe, but upon the whole world, and in order to do this we must not shrink from using force, and, if necessary, to unsheath once more our sword, and to throw its weight into the balance. I have always admired the exclamation of the Barbarian Chief Brennus, when he cried out, "Væ victis!" This is a sound principle, and I find that all the great German thinkers share this opinion. We begin to understand in Germany that, though a great deal

has been done to establish our supremacy, yet more remains to be performed, and with God's help I shall try to be the one who will work towards this aim of establishing the world-wide empire which existed for a few years under Charlemagne, which Napoleon dreamt of assuring to his dynasty, but which so far has remained an Utopia. I mean to make it a fact, and Germany means it with me, or will mean it, when I shall call upon her to do so. My stay in Bonn has done me a lot of good. It has proved to me that on the day when I shall find it my duty to call upon the German people to lend me a hand in the colossal task of consolidating the work of my ancestors and of my great grandfather, it will rise up to the occasion and not refuse me its support. The very progress which we Germans have made in every branch we have turned our activity to proves that we shall not hesitate before any sacrifices in order to give to the world the advantages of our Kultur, of our strength, of our science. I know now that I shall never be forsaken by the men of learning in my country, that the representatives of its moral forces and of its intellectual greatness will always stand by me in an hour of crisis, and I have the satisfaction to see that they are bringing up the young generation in ideas of strict obedience and sub-

mission to those high designs which I am convinced Providence has in regard to us. Yes, I am glad, very glad indeed, to have had the opportunity to breathe the atmosphere of Bonn, one of our oldest university towns, where the true spirit of Germany lives and inspires everything and everybody's work.

*Berlin, June 3d, 1878.*

I was called back here from Bonn by the news of the attempted assassination of my grandfather. I will not try to describe my dismay, my terror and the anxiety I and the whole German nation have gone through for three days. This morning we were told by Professor Langenbeck that God had performed a miracle, and that there was a faint chance of our beloved Sovereign recovering from his severe wounds. It seems almost a wonder at his age. How fervently, oh, how fervently I have prayed for him! This would have been such a terrible end to his glorious life—slain by the hand of one of his ungrateful subjects! One can scarcely realise it. At first there were people who thought that the criminal had been inspired by French sympathies, and what a relief it would have been had such been the case. But it seems certain that he was a

German, belonging to this detestable socialist party, which ought to be crushed with the utmost severity. I cannot describe what I have felt those three days. Apart from the grief I would have experienced had grandfather died, there was the knowledge that at my age, and unmarried as I am still, my position with regard to my parents would have been a most difficult one. Though they will not own it, they still consider me, if not quite a child, at least a youth without importance, and if my father should become Sovereign to-day he would certainly display towards me a severity which would be most irksome for me to bear. My father has now been appointed Regent during the Emperor's illness, but Regent with restricted powers, of course, a thing that does not please him, and which seems to affect my mother very much. She does not say so, but I fancy she was rather disappointed to find that she would have to wait for some time longer before becoming Queen. I went to meet my parents when they returned here from England, where they had been on a visit when the crime took place. An immense crowd was awaiting them at the station, but it was a crowd endowed with tact, because no one cheered, and the men simply stood with heads uncovered, whilst women waved their handkerchiefs. It was altogether a solemn

home coming, and it must have affected the travellers. My parents drove at once to the Palace to see the King, and he was able to receive them for a few minutes. The Empress is also here, arrived yesterday morning, almost at the same time as myself. She greeted me most affectionately, and it seems to me that she would rather see me become Emperor than my mother Empress. Perhaps this is a wrong impression after all. This morning I had a long interview with my father, when I was surprised to hear that he wanted me to return immediately to Bonn. He said that there was no longer any immediate danger of my grandfather dying, and that as I would begin my military duties in earnest next year, it was just as well I should miss as little as possible from the course of studies I was undergoing in Bonn. Should my grandfather get worse, I could be easily summoned. Besides, there were other reasons which made him wish I should remain away from Berlin just now. The Congress which is to revise the treaty of San Stefano is to meet here next week, and it would not be convenient for me to be here during its sittings. I might be asked to attend some of the festivities given in honour of it, and people would of course be eager to listen to any remarks I might make, and interpret them

as the expression of the opinions of the Royal Family in grave political questions, where it was better it should not commit itself. It was for this reason he had gone to England with my mother, so as not to be in Berlin during the sittings of the Congress. Now it was different, and he had been compelled to return, but he did not mean to show himself in public at all. He could not, however, impose the same rule upon me, and so it was better I should return to Bonn. I had been quite right of course to come to Berlin upon hearing of the misfortune which had happened to grandfather, but at present there was no reason I should remain, and so he expected me to leave to-morrow. I asked whether I could not see grandfather, but he said he did not think so. The sick man had to be kept very quiet, and altogether I had better go. Of course I had to submit, but it seems to me that my father has other reasons which he will not tell me, for insisting on my departure. Does he fear I might criticise anything that he does? I certainly should not do so just now. I know that for the moment I depend on father, and he is free to impose his will upon me, but I do wish I could begin my military duties soon. This would make me independent, and I need not ask any one's permission to go about as I like, unless it be that

of the Colonel of my regiment, and I fancy the latter will be but too pleased to allow me to do what I wish, outside of the necessities of the service.

I would have liked to stay here; I would have liked to follow the deliberations of the Congress. It has always seemed to me that Germany ought to interest itself far more than it has done hitherto in the affairs of the Balkan Peninsula in particular, and of the Near East in general. There is there an outlay for German industry which ought not to be neglected. We Germans must turn our activities towards other countries than our own. We must favour the expansion of our trade which finds its development obstructed everywhere in Europe. We have a great future before us, and we ought not to neglect any chance to improve it. And then there is Russia. What will Russia do after this Congress? She has come out of one of the most foolish wars a nation has ever waged, with her prestige diminished instead of improved in the Balkans and among those Slav populations she set herself to liberate from the yoke of the unspeakable Turk. She has lost much, and has gained nothing. This is not the way to go to war, and she will very soon discover it to her regret and detriment.



*Bonn, August 5th, 1878.*

I have at last been able to accomplish one of the things which I had been wishing for so long a time. I have been to Paris and visited the Exhibition under the veil of the strictest incognito. No one knew or suspected that the three tourists who had taken up their abode in one of the small hotels in the rue de Rivoli were the son, daughter, and son-in-law of the future German Emperor. Charlotte had taken no maid, and neither myself nor Bernard a valet. We had bought linen and clothes specially for the occasion devoid of monograms, or of any sign which might have led people to suspect our identity, and we had not even let the Embassy know that we were there. It was great fun, and I am most thankful to my parents and to grandfather for not having raised any objection to the plan. I wished to see France, to look at Paris, to form for myself an opinion of the French character. I must say that I was most favourably impressed. The French are neither the sneaky, nor the godless nation I had been led to believe they were, and I begin to think that my father and mother were right in their admiration of them. It is certain that their country has shown wonderful strength of recuperation after the heavy trials it has been subjected to. No one would think in seeing it that only eight years

have passed since the disasters of the war of 1870. The prosperity is greater than ever ; people are working and enjoying themselves, at the same time, with an ease and a consciousness of their own strength, that has given me a great deal to think of. I wish we could be friends instead of enemies. I wonder whether it would not be possible to try and efface in the minds of Frenchmen the remembrance of all that they have suffered. I wonder whether Captain von Hindenburg was right when he said that they would never forgive us for having taken away from them Alsace and Lorraine, and whether, in view of this fact, it would not have been better for us to have consolidated our victory by the annexation of a more important slip of territory. I wish I knew a way in which we might pass the sponge over old scores and re-establish between France and Germany friendly relations. It seems to me that if only we could work hand in hand we should conquer the world together. French influence in artistic and literary matters might be of use to us, whilst we could correct the false leanings of the French in regard to philosophy, science, religion, and other points in which France is our inferior.

I enjoyed those days in Paris. Driving in the Bois de Boulogne and down the Avenue des Champs Elysées was quite lovely. Of course

we went to Versailles and I wondered what Louis XIV. would have said had he seen the ceremony which took place in the Galerie des Glaces on the 18th of January, 1870, when my grandfather accepted the crown of the German Emperors in the old Palace which had seen all the glories of the Bourbons. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. I sometimes ask myself whether the day will ever come when the glory of the Hohenzollerns shall also pass and become dust like so many other things. I shall not see such an event. Of this I am sure. But after I am gone what will happen? I have sometimes a vivid imagination, and I saw myself driving in a gilded coach with outriders in this wonderful Paris, greeted by the cheers of the French multitude. It would be glorious, and yet how easy to obtain. I would only have to return this unfortunate Alsace to France, and I should instantly be proclaimed the greatest man and hero that ever lived. The French press would cover me with praise, and the Frenchwomen with flowers. I should become at once popular all through France. Unfortunately this is impossible, and yet it is nice to dream such a dream. I shall always feel that I have missed something by failing to win for myself the admiration of the French people. I have come to the conclusion that it would be quite worth winning. A nation

capable of reorganising itself as it has done, after one of the greatest disasters known in history had assailed it, is worthy to be counted amongst one's friends.

I had imagined that I would find Paris still a mass of ruins, but I was vastly mistaken in this supposition. Paris is a magnificent city, which appears to be one of the most prosperous in the world, and if the people have paid us five milliards, they certainly do not seem to miss them. On the contrary everything points to vast wealth, and to an immense well-being. This surprises me, and from a certain point it troubles me. Suppose France won't let bygones be bygones, and persists in her attitude of hostility towards us, then what shall we do? We certainly cannot allow her to go unmolested on the road to that immense commercial and industrial superiority she seems to be striving for to-day. It will become our duty to stop her, to prevent her from acquiring friends and alliances. And then it will mean another war, a merciless one this time, where pity shall be unknown, and where every desire to spare the enemy shall be crushed under the heavy weight of responsibility, which shall require Germany to assert itself and to annihilate all the rivals she finds standing in her path. I feel sorry for this. I wish Frenchmen would see that their advantage

would be in accepting the hand which we are but too willing to stretch out to them, provided they do not interfere with our schemes of world-wide dominion. I confess that though I find this country and its inhabitants most sympathetic, yet I would not care to share with them that Empire of the world which I wish and mean to obtain.

I discussed all this the other day with a friend of my mother's, but she is a Russian, and of course cannot understand the point of view which I take. She declared to me quite frankly that she did not well see how it would ever be possible for France and Prussia to become friends, unless indeed I decided to return to the former country her lost provinces. And neither did she see how, even if I wished to do it, I could perform this pious intention, destined to add one more stone to the pavement of hell. At least this was her elegant way of expressing herself. She pointed out to me that Alsace and Lorraine were now a part of the German Empire, over which I could have no control when I became Emperor. The most that could be done would be to grant an autonomy to these provinces. But then this would mean endless trouble, because it is certain that such a measure would only encourage France in her hopes to get back the territory she had been compelled to abandon eight years ago. This

remark made me very unhappy, because it seemed to presage all kinds of sad things in the future. It is certain that if I cannot make a friend of France I shall be compelled to crush it entirely, because it is impossible for the German Empire to go on existing with the fear of a possible aggression from that side. I have been accused of favouring militarism, but this is certainly not exact. I, too, would like to see universal peace become an accomplished fact in this world. But this is impossible, or at least can be reached only upon the day that Germany has subdued all her enemies, and obliged all her neighbours to acknowledge her supremacy over them, not only in military matters, but also in industry, trade, science, and organisation. And she cannot hope to subdue these enemies unless she keeps intact the spirit of her army. I mean always to give to the army the first place in my thoughts. Grandfather has done it, with what splendid results we have seen. I am afraid that my father has not sufficient love for the army in his heart. He considers, of course, its interests and its welfare; he loves his soldiers as men, but not as part of the army which can be exterminated if need be, and which is such an essential guarantee of the prosperity of our Fatherland. I love the army as an instrument with the help of which the

Hohenzollerns have ousted the Hapsburgs from Germany, and snatched from them the crown of Barbarossa and of Frederick II., and I believe that this is the right way of caring for it.

*January 5th, 1879.*

I am expecting every day to be ordered to Potsdam to take up my duties as officer in the First Regiment of Foot Guards. This, however, is only for a few months, as it has been decided by grandfather that I shall be transferred to the Hussars of the Guards as soon as possible. It is in conformity with the traditions of our House that I have to begin my military service in an infantry regiment. I shall be very glad when the time comes for my going home. I begin to be sick of Bonn, in the sense that I think it has done me all the good it can do, and I seem to be wasting time at present. I have to learn things which a University cannot teach. I have to come in contact with the soldiers who will be mine one day, to try to understand them and the spirit of our army, which so far I only know through what I have been told concerning it, and what I have learned in books. This is not sufficient at all.

*June 12th, 1879.*

Yesterday my grandparents celebrated their golden wedding. Yesterday, too, I began in earnest my military service, and was the officer in command of the guard in the chapel of the Castle, where a religious ceremony took place in honour of the occasion. It was indeed a great day, and what a crowd of thoughts must have passed through the mind of the Emperor and of the Empress, concerning all the events that have taken place in the half century which has gone by since they were married! Prussia then was a small kingdom, and my grandfather was not even the heir to the Throne. Who could have foreseen all that has happened in those years? I could distinctly see the lips of my grandfather move in prayer, a prayer of thankfulness to the Almighty who has allowed him to accomplish such great things. Prince von Bismarck, who generally goes nowhere, was in the chapel, standing behind a lady whom I rather like, and with whom one can talk, which is more than can be said of other women. As a rule I do not care for ladies' conversation. They are either stupid or frivolous, and women are certainly not interesting to me from an intellectual point of view. I had an opportunity to exchange a few words with the Chancellor. I told him that I was glad



to see him looking so well, and that it was my intention to pay him a visit if he would allow me to do so. "It will be an honour for me to receive your Royal Highness," replied the Prince, and we settled there and then that I should call upon him the next day in the afternoon before the official dinner at the Castle. I have just come back now from the Foreign Office, and I wish to write down my impressions. This conversation was the first serious one I have had with our great Minister, and I replied freely to the different questions he put to me, and especially related to him the impressions I had experienced during my visit to Paris last summer. The Prince listened to me with great attention, and said that he also would have liked to be able to bring about better relations between our government and that of the French Republic, but that he had found it an impossibility, on account of all the private interests that came between his good intentions and their realisation. He made an allusion to the intrigues against him headed by the Empress, and also regretted that my mother could not divest herself of her prejudices against him, due most probably, as he politely added, to the fact of her being an English Princess, and consequently in a certain sense a foreigner to our Kultur. And he advised me when I married to wed

a German lady, who would be able to take to heart exclusively the interests of Germany. "Your Royal Highness will most likely have a great part to play in the task of moulding Germany into the groove whither she is bound to fall, and it would be a pity if you found yourself hampered by home influence." I told the Prince that when I married it was my intention to keep my wife outside of politics, and not to allow her to know anything concerning the business of the State. The Chancellor smiled, and said that this might not prove as easy as I imagined, a remark which jarred upon my nerves; and that in view of possible contingencies it was better that the future Empress of Germany should be a German. I asked him point-blank to tell me whether he thought it possible another war with France could break out in the near future. "This will not happen so long as the King and the Crown Prince are alive, nor whilst I am Prime Minister," he replied. "We are all three of us too old and too experienced to launch ourselves into any adventure; and a war at present would be nothing else but an adventure. Germany does not require new conquests. She need only apply herself to keep what she has won. It is impossible ever to foresee the results of a war. We might this time be beaten by the French together with the Russians,

in case the latter threw in their fate with the Republic. One must not forget that the Tzar is deeply offended with us on account of the peace which was imposed upon him by the Congress of Berlin, and he blames us entirely for the humiliation which was inflicted upon him then. He might easily wish to avenge it, Alexander II. is very vindictive. For this reason I would do much to avoid a war, which we should be obliged to fight without allies and on the chance of our merits alone. This is not quite sufficient. No, Germany requires at present peace, as indeed does the whole world, and for this reason as well as for many others, I hope long years will elapse before your Royal Highness steps upon the Throne, if you will forgive me for speaking so plainly. The present political situation requires to be handled by men with experience of government and not by soldiers, and your Highness for the present is only a soldier." He said this so graciously and kindly that I could not feel offended, and besides I felt that the Prince was speaking the truth. I have not yet sufficient experience to be a King, but at the same time I hope I may not have to wait for years, as my father is doing, before I become one. Bismarck seemed to guess what was going on in my mind,

because he immediately caught up the strain of my thoughts.

"I know what troubles your Royal Highness," he said; "it is the dread of the difficulties you may encounter when you find yourself the Heir apparent, and not merely the Heir presumptive to the Crown, and I shall not attempt to minimise these difficulties. Since time immemorial a Sovereign and his eventual successor have never got on well together, in Prussia less than anywhere else. I would therefore advise you not to commit yourself for the present to any line of policy which you might find yourself compelled to abandon later on. Keep silent, look around you, avoid becoming the head of a party; try even to subdue your intelligence, until the time comes when you may assert yourself, and perhaps this will come sooner than you suppose. Useless to add that I shall always consider it an honour to put my experience at the service of your Royal Highness."

I can see very well what Prince Bismarck means, and I must say I am sorry he has become such a pacifist. Others are not, and it seems to me that Count von Moltke has different opinions, and would not be sorry to have before he dies another opportunity to win some new laurels on

a battlefield. I shall go to see him soon, to hear what he has to say.

*June 15th, 1879.*

I paid the Field Marshal the desired visit, and it was a most interesting one. He is called the "Silent Warrior," and it caused me some trouble to get him to express an opinion on our prospects of war or of peace in the near future. He said, however, that he had considered it all along a great mistake not to have crushed France so entirely that she could not have raised her head again for the next hundred years or so. It would have been in his opinion the best way to avoid another war. "You must not make a mistake, your Royal Highness," said the old veteran; "the only sure way to avoid war is not to have enemies. Placed as Prussia is, she will continually be surrounded by foes, therefore, in her interest she must try and get rid of them by destroying them one after the other, and it would be far more merciful in the end. We have not gained much by taking Strasburg and Metz. We ought to have insisted on the cession of Belfort and of Northern France, the command of which would, in case hostilities break out once more, prevent us from being subjected to an

aggression from England, whose intentions in regard to us I do not trust. Don't forget that we require colonies, and the control, at least in a just degree, of the seas. This, Great Britain will try to prevent by every means in her power. If we had insisted on more drastic conditions of peace eight years ago, we should not have roused against us a greater outcry than the one that was started, and we should have acquired advantages and security for the future. Look at Napoleon; he never stopped at half measures, but he took great care to consolidate his conquests by annexing to his empire all the countries which he had taken, or at least to make them dependent on him for their existence. This was wise, and we were not wise in 1871. We have created, thanks to our spirit of moderation, a situation which can only end by another war, ten thousand times more terrible than the ones which we have fought hitherto. I am only a soldier, and not a politician, but I know what the security of Germany requires, and I hope that if we are ever compelled to take up arms again we shall erase mercy and humanity from our programme. The best mercy is to strike terror into the hearts of our enemies. They will understand that; whilst they will always attribute to our moderation reasons which do not exist."

This conversation has troubled my thoughts considerably. I find myself to-day placed between two parties and two opinions. My grandfather says he has had enough of war; my parents abhor the very idea of it; and even our great Prince Bismarck declares that he does not think the security of Germany requires we should fight another one. He seems quite content with the advantages which we have won. On the other hand, another great man, Count von Moltke, finds, as do all the military authorities with whom I have discussed the subject, that the development of the Empire requires something more than we have obtained, in order to be safe from foreign encroachments, and perhaps even from destruction. Whom am I to believe? Who is right? To whom ought I to listen? The position in which I find myself has obliged me to give my attention to things and facts that other young men of my age have no reason to discuss or to worry about. I may at any time be called to take into my hands the vast interests of the German Empire. I ought to be prepared for this. I ought to have a programme of my own ready to put into execution on the day when I ascend the throne of my ancestors. What shall this programme be? War or peace, or peace whilst keeping always in mind the possibility of war? Shall

I place my confidence in politicians or in my army, remembering that it was the soldier and the army, and not parliamentary majorities, that have welded together the German Empire?

*June 1st, 1880.*

My marriage with the Princess Augusta Victoria of Schleswig Holstein Augustenburg has been decided upon and declared. I like the Princess. She is a charming, fresh, German girl, who will make a perfect Empress, and at the same time an excellent wife. My mother and father, as well as the Emperor and Prince Bismarck, are quite pleased at my having fallen in so readily with their views in regard to my betrothal, which in a certain sense is a political event, because it puts an end to a feud that has lasted for something like fifteen years, and it has reconciled our House with one of the minor dynasties that have had to suffer through the rise of Prussia. I have thus fulfilled the injunction given to me by Prince Bismarck one year ago, to marry a German Princess, and not to introduce another foreigner into our home. I felt it was my duty to give to the Emperor the satisfaction of knowing that I was settled, and perhaps to see the line of succession continued in my children. This is an important



thing, because it is no longer Prussia alone which this question of the dynasty concerns, but the whole of the German Empire. I also felt that it was high time for me to have a regular establishment of my own, and not merely a bachelor one. Prince William of Prussia must become a personage in the State. As for my future wife, she need not fear that I shall ever be wanting in respect and consideration in regard to her. I shall know how to treat her, and honour in her a German Empress, and the mother of future German Emperors. But I shall certainly not allow her to have anything to do with my private affairs or those of the State. I have never understood how my father could bring himself to discuss these with my mother. It has not brought him luck, because her opinions have never been in accord with the military spirit of our country, and I am afraid that she has influenced her husband to consider more the question of pacifism than that of militarism, in its application to the moral and intellectual development of a country. My mother is a woman of high intelligence, and this has perhaps been her bane, because we do not want the women of Prussia to be intelligent, nor feminine influence, no matter in what shape or form, to prevail. Our country must exist without this disturbing element.

*February 27th, 1881.*

I was married to-day in the chapel of the Castle. We shall settle in Potsdam, where I am to continue my service in the Hussars of the Guards.

*May 6th, 1882.*

My son was born to-day. He is the first heir to the German Empire, and I feel that I have performed my duty towards this Empire, in providing our dynasty with a successor in the direct line. My grandfather is so happy, far happier than my father, at least outwardly. He never expected to have this wish of his granted before he died, to see his family continued by me. In the country, also, the event has been hailed with immense joy, and I have received any amount of congratulations. The Reichstag even sent a deputation to assure me of its satisfaction and that of the whole Empire. Now I can think of the future with a certain amount of pride which I could not feel before, when I had not done anything for the welfare of my country or of the dynasty of which I am one day to be the head.

*April 6th, 1884.*

Grandfather called me this morning, and told me that he intends to send me as his representative to St. Petersburg to attend the festivities connected with the coming of age of the Russian Heir to the Throne. This will be my first official mission of importance, and I appreciate very much this proof of confidence which is reposed in me by the Emperor. He talked to me a long time about it. He has always been exceedingly fond of everything connected with Russia and with the House of Romanoff, on account of his sister, the late Empress Charlotte, who was the Consort of Nicholas I., and he has constantly worked towards the maintenance of amicable relations between our government and that of the Tzar. The present Russian Sovereign, however, has not so far responded to the affection which grandfather has for him, and, thanks to his Danish wife, has shown himself as anti-German as possible. Grandfather, on the other hand, would like to see the previous intimacy which existed between our court and that of St. Petersburg renewed whilst he is alive, as he fears that my father is not so well disposed towards Russia as himself. When discussing the subject with me this morning, he exposed to me the reasons why he considered that it is essential for the future

prosperity of Prussia that its Kings should keep upon good terms with our great northern neighbour. "The future belongs to you, my boy," he said, "and upon you will rest the responsibility of Germany's future political development. I do not believe that this development can prosper, or in general that we can attain the aims which we ought to have, without the co-operation of Russia. This is partly the reason why I am anxious for you to go to St. Petersburg and to become personally acquainted with Russian affairs as well as with the Tzar. If you succeed in pleasing the latter, this will help a good deal to allay any suspicions he may nurse in regard to our intentions. Prince von Bismarck has insisted on concluding an alliance with Austria, but I will tell you at once that this course of action has never appealed to me. I would like you, therefore, to exert yourself to win the regard of the Tzar. It may be of incalculable advantage to Germany in the future to establish a kind of understanding between you and him, and I hope you will follow my instructions in this respect, and obey me as well as you can."

Of course I shall obey grandfather, and though perhaps I do not quite share his enthusiasm for Russia and everything that is Russian, yet I will apply myself to satisfy him. Grandfather has a

wonderful political instinct, and he always knows what is best for the interests of our country and dynasty. His ideas on this point are entirely different from those of my father, who, when talking with me about my journey to St. Petersburg (which, acting upon the advice of the Emperor, I went immediately on leaving the Palace to acquaint him with), advised me to keep to an expectant attitude, and not to compromise myself by any expression of opinion. He urged me, however, to show great deference to the Tzar, whom he called a very great man in his way, which, he hastened to add, was not the European way. My mother refrained from saying what she thought, and I fancy that she is not over pleased to find that I am considered capable of fulfilling any political mission. But she ought to understand that my father could not have been entrusted with the mission to represent the King at festivities arranged in honour of the coming of age of a boy of sixteen. If I had been younger it would have been another Prussian Prince who would have been sent to St. Petersburg, but never the Heir to the German Empire. I discussed this matter with a great friend of mother's, a lady whom she honours with her confidence notwithstanding the fact that she is a Russian. I like this lady, who is clever in her way, and sometimes through her

I get to hear things which otherwise would not reach my ears. She told me that she also, as well as my mother, feared that I would make a failure of my mission to Russia. "Your Royal Highness is apt to think too much of your own importance; this will amuse, but at the same time annoy, the Tzar. He may allow you to see it, and then it will be your turn to feel affronted, and this may bring about friction on both sides."

This angered me. Why do people, and especially why do my mother's friends, always think that I shall do something tactless? I mean on the contrary to make this Russian visit a success, and to exert myself to win the sympathies of the Tzar. The Heir to the Throne is far too young to be considered for the present.

*May 25th, 1884.*

I am just back from St. Petersburg, and have reported to the Emperor the details connected with my visit. He seemed pleased, and told me that he had received a letter from the Tzar, thanking him for having entrusted me with the mission of presenting to him his congratulations, and expressing himself as very well impressed by my visit. I wonder whether this last assertion

was sincere or not. The Tzar did not seem to have taken kindly to me, and indeed he treated me all the time as a young man absolutely devoid of importance, to whom a certain politeness ought to be tendered, but nothing more. I felt this, though not one word was said, and I confess that I did not like it. As for my general impressions about Russia, the country is absolutely different from what I had imagined. It is immense, but there seems to be absolutely no order or organisation in its government, and the waste and expenditure of the Court is something appalling, as is in general Russian carelessness in matters of money. The people are either half, not to say entirely, savages, or else depraved to a degree which makes one think of the old Roman civilisation which fell under the invasion of the Barbarians from the North. As for the Tzar himself, he certainly is an imposing figure, a man who knows what he is about, and one who will not stand nonsense in any shape or form. He has made a point of upholding Russian prestige and of instilling into the minds of his subjects the necessity of being mindful of Russian interests, and not accepting any foreign influence. During the reign of Alexander II. German kultur was immensely admired, and German and French were the languages most

spoken at Court and in society. Now you only hear Russian, and the Emperor himself never speaks anything else with the people whom he addresses, which I think is quite right. It has always revolted me to find that my grandmother affects to use only the French language, a bad habit which, I am bound to say, my mother has not caught, because she always talks German to us, or at least has done so since we left the nursery for the schoolroom. As for myself, I shall never allow anything else but German to be spoken at my Court, and if people blame me for this I shall quote the example of the present Tzar.

The Empress Marie was amiable but cool in her reception of me. I fancy that she has not yet quite forgiven Prussia for the Danish war. The young Cesarowitch I found a mere child, and at sixteen I was far more of a man than he seems to be. He has his mother's eyes, but not her disposition it seems, because there is a vein of cruelty in his character which forebodes nothing good to his people. I saw him beat his dog until the poor animal writhed under the blows. I will never beat a dog or an animal. There is no fun in it. But I can quite understand that it might be an enjoyable sensation to look upon the physical agony of a man, if the latter stood in your way.



Of course what interested me most was the Russian army. I witnessed one big Review, and visited the barracks of the famous Preobragensky Regiment, and those of the Chevaliers Gardes, which in Russia are the equivalent of our own Gardes du Corps, whose uniform is almost identical with theirs. Certainly these visits were most interesting. The men all looked very fit, and the horses splendid. But the stables were not kept as well as those of our cavalry regiments, and the soldiers seemed to lack initiative, and to understand only what their officers commanded them to do, without the slightest exercise of any judgment on their own part. The cavalry, however, is far superior to the infantry. The latter marched past before the Emperor very badly, and did not look as if it could ever endure great hardships. I am told, however, that this impression of mine is not correct, because during the Turkish campaign, it was the infantry that bore the brunt of the work, and did it exceedingly well. But the precision and exactitude which make our army such an admirable instrument of warfare are totally lacking in the Russian army.

I had a long talk about this with General von Schweinitz, our Ambassador in St. Petersburg, who has been so many years in Russia that he knows it better perhaps than any other diplomat.

He told me that he considered the army had considerably improved as regarded discipline, since the accession of the present Emperor, and that moreover the commissariat department had been reorganised and put on far better and stronger lines than it had been during the preceding reign, when corruption was the only power existing. I asked the General what he thought concerning the prospects of peace for the next few years. He replied that he felt convinced Alexander III. would do his best to avoid war, no matter with whom; and that his very existence was a guarantee that Russia would not hurry into any adventure, as for instance the war with Turkey in 1877. This remark set me wondering, and gave me much to think about. I am not quite sure whether it would be for the best interests of the German army to remain too long inactive. Its martial spirit might suffer; and then, I also feel convinced that for our future security the possession of the Russian Baltic provinces is a necessity. How are we to get them except through a successful war? Before I left St. Petersburg, the Tzar suddenly unbent, and very politely asked me whether it would interest me to accompany him to some manœuvres which will take place in Lithuania, near a town called Brest Litovsk, which is also an important fortress. I said that of course

nothing would delight me more, but that I had to ask the permission of the Emperor before accepting. Upon which Alexander III. most amiably volunteered to ask, himself, for this permission, a thing which I feel sure will delight grandfather more than anything else could do. If this plan really comes to maturity, I shall ask General von Moltke to persuade the Emperor to allow one of the able officers of our General Staff to accompany me. The latter would be able to observe things which would escape my notice, especially in regard to the armaments of troops and the equipment of fortresses.

When I returned here, I did not know whether the Tzar had mentioned his invitation to me to grandfather, so I refrained from talking about it myself, but it seems that Alexander III. is a man of his word, and that he had really entreated the Emperor to permit me to return to Russia next September. Of course the latter acquiesced, but to my surprise I found that my parents were exceedingly displeased at this plan, and my mother even remarked, "that it was ridiculous to show such deference to Willy, whose head was sure to be turned by all this flattery." She told this to my wife who was most indignant, and nearly cried in her distress at this unjust attitude adopted by my mother. I was also

painfully impressed by her words, and asked the lady, to whom I have already referred, whether she would explain the reason of this new bitterness which seemed to have grown in my parents' hearts towards me. She said that it was difficult to do so, but that she thought there were people who were trying to set my father and mother against me, and to persuade them that I was striving to supplant them in the affections and confidence of the King. I had not noticed this myself, and said so, but she appeared not to believe me, and she remarked that of course strangers always judged by appearances; and that appearances were against me, in so far that it was known that I had been trying all along to win the favour of Prince Bismarck, so as to obtain some political post, or at least some position which would allow me to exercise an influence on State affairs, a thing which had always been denied to the Crown Prince. I had not suspected that my frequent visits to the Chancellor had become public property, nor that an importance had been given to them which they did not possess, and I said so, and further asked my friend to try and explain to my mother (because, after all, she is the person most concerned, as my father will always submit to her judgment) that I had no such intentions as those ascribed to me.

Upon which she smiled, and asked me whether I was quite sincere in what I said. This angered me, though I know that she is a good friend of mine, and that she wishes me well, but it is not pleasant to me to find that I am so generally distrusted that even a woman in whom I have had a great deal of confidence, and to whom I have told things which I should not care to have others know, should suspect me of harbouring sinister designs in regard to my parents.

*January 14th, 1885.*

I was appointed on the 1st of January to the command of the Regiment of the Hussars of the Guard, in which I was a Captain for some time. This was a source of great pleasure to me, and I shall apply myself to acquire popularity among my officers and men. I think that they will like me, because they will soon find out that I have their interests at heart, and that I shall do all I can to ensure their comfort and to make out of them the best soldiers in our splendid army. I feel now that I am at last in a position which is in a certain sense unassailable, and this is the first time that I can think such is the case. At present the only disadvantage I see in this new appointment is that it puts an end to my daily visits at the General Staff, to which I have been

attached for the last six months, and where I have found occupations which were very congenial to me. I don't know why, but it seems to me that both my father and mother have had something to do with this new appointment which was a great surprise to me. They do not like to know that I am every day in Berlin, and they prefer I should be compelled to stay more in Potsdam. I thought at first that one of the reasons of this was the fact of my visits to Madame X., my mother's friend, but when I mentioned the subject to the latter, she laughed in my face, and replied that on the contrary the Crown Princess was very pleased to know that I saw her so often, because this allowed her to convey to me through a channel which she would not have had otherwise, her wishes on more than one occasion. I did not care for this remark, and I said so. I imagined that Madame X—— put me before my mother, and I consider it very mean on her part not to have done so. I was still further troubled when she said that perhaps she could explain what had made the Crown Prince and the Princess desirous of seeing me prevented from coming too often to Berlin, and that I ought to look for the reason in the information which I had given to Prince Bismarck concerning a certain interview which had taken place in the apart-

ments of Count von Seckendorff in the Prinzen-sinen Palais, between the Crown Prince and Richter, the leader of the National Liberal Party in the Reichstag. Now it is true that I had spoken about this with the Chancellor, but I had never suspected that this had become known, and I enquired how this was possible, blushing as I did so, I am sorry to say. Thereupon my friend told me that she thought it best to let me know the truth, if only to prevent me from doing anything so mean in the future. She really used the word *mean*, and for once I found nothing to reply to her. The facts of the case are as follows: When the Government presented the last military bill to the Reichstag the liberal parties together with the Catholic Centre declared that they would vote against it. Richter led the opposition in regard to this bill, to the extreme anger of the Emperor, who had set his heart on the credits he had asked for being granted to the Government. Now my father had also disapproved of the bill, but for different reasons, and he wished very much to see Richter, and to have a talk with him on the subject. To do this openly would, of course, have been impossible, because it would have brought about the anger of the King, and perhaps even induced the Chancellor to remind my father as he had already done on several

occasions, that according to the Prussian Constitution, the Heir to the Throne had not the right to discuss any governmental measure proposed by the Ministry to the Chambers. Things had therefore to be arranged in such a way that this interview, about which father was so eager, should take place as if by accident. Count Seckendorff, than whom a more mischievous friend does not exist, immediately suggested that he might ask Richter to come to his apartments, where the Crown Prince and the Princess could find themselves as if by chance, a thing which would appear quite simple, as they were in the habit of dropping in now and then at the Count's for an hour's talk. Things were accordingly arranged in that way, but great precautions were observed in order that this meeting should not become known. It seems that whilst the Crown Prince was talking with the Liberal Leader, Seckendorff was keeping watch in the corridor, at the other end of which stood for the same purpose Madame X—— herself, whom my mother had asked to help her on this occasion. No one imagined that the secret could ever be revealed, but one of my mother's maids had by accident become aware of it through a note from Count Seckendorff, addressed to the Crown Princess, which she had, unfortunately for her, left lying



on her dressing table. The maid told her brother about it and he, happening to be my valet, related to me the whole story. I really did think it my duty to mention it in my turn to Prince Bismarck in the course of a conversation, and a terrible row had been the consequence. The Emperor sent for my father, and angry words were exchanged between them. The Crown Prince's Master of the Household, Mr. von Norman, who was supposed to have engineered this whole affair owing to the fact of his being a personal friend of Richter's, was dismissed by the Sovereign, to my parent's despair. No one, however, had connected me with this incident, for which I felt devoutly thankful, so that it was a disagreeable revelation for me to find that the part which I had taken in it had become known, and I could not help asking Madame X—— to tell me how this was possible. She then told me that as there had only been four persons aware of the interview which my parents had had with Richter, these being my father and mother, Count Seckendorff and herself, and as none of them had spoken about it, they had had to look for a delinquent. My mother had then remembered the note she had left on her dressing table and had immediately suspected her maid of being the person guilty of the indiscretion, and of trans-

ferring the knowledge she had by chance acquired to me, employing her brother as the channel of communication. It seems that the fact of my having tried at different times to learn what was going on in my parents' house through this maid had been discovered. Neither the Crown Prince nor the Crown Princess had wished to mention the matter to me, as they had considered it below their dignity; but my father had used every effort to have me appointed to a position where my duties would keep me outside of Berlin.

This confirmed my worst suspicions, and I cannot say that I enjoyed this conversation with Madame X——. But I quickly made up my mind as to what my future course of action ought to be, and I immediately sought Prince Bismarck. The latter seemed surprised to see me appear at an unexpected time and hour, but listened with attention to what I had to tell him. I began by relating to him all that I had heard, and asked him to take my part with the Emperor should the latter ever come to learn what had taken place. I also entreated the Prince to help me acquire a position independent of my parents, in which I could make myself useful to my grandfather as well as to the State. The fact is that I would like to be initiated in the affairs of the government, because I feel that I may not have to wait as long

as my father is doing before becoming in my turn an Emperor, and before this moment arrives I wish to understand the art of governing better than I do at present. The Chancellor quite fell in with my views, and he declared that he could realise the feelings which were actuating me, but that I ought not to take too much to heart the disagreeable incident with which I had acquainted him, because my intentions had been good and neither he nor the King could misunderstand them. I am not, however, quite so sure about this last point, because I know that grandfather hates everything which savours of an indiscretion, and that he also dislikes what he calls meanness, and I fear he would class my conduct under this category. I left the Chancellor's Palace, however, very much easier in my mind than I had been after my conversation with Madame X—— and I was agreeably surprised a few days later on receiving an order from grandfather, enjoining me to study three times a week the administration of home affairs, in the Home Office in Berlin, in addition to my military duties. This proved to me that Prince Bismarck was determined to show himself my friend, and of course this is most important for me, in view of the great difficulties of my position, which is fast becoming more than a delicate one, placed, as I

happen to be, between the desire of my grandfather to see me introduced to the different branches of the public service and the anger of the Crown Prince to find that I am allowed what has always been refused him.

*June 17th, 1885.*

A great event, or, rather, two great events, have taken place within the last three days. Uncle Frederick Charles and Field Marshal von Manteuffel have both died almost simultaneously. I sincerely regret the former. He was a great soldier, and one with whom the interests of the army were always paramount. His conduct during the two campaigns of 1866 and of 1870 was admirable in every respect. I liked to go and talk with him and hear him relate some of the incidents of those memorable wars. He also deeply deplored the moderation which we had displayed in regard to France. He quite shared the opinion of Count von Moltke that we had only prepared the road for another and more disastrous war by not putting France out of power to recover from her reverses for the next hundred years or so. My uncle had made it his study to watch every progress which the French army had made, or was making, since the establishment

of the republican government, and he had told me more than once that he had been quite surprised to find that the martial spirit of the nation was growing with every day that passed, and that far from having forgotten the loss of their provinces, Frenchmen were constantly thinking and preparing themselves to regain possession of them through another war. He often made me observe the manner in which Napoleon and other great conquerors had proceeded after each victorious campaign they had fought. Their aim had always been to weaken their enemies until they could not regain their breath and had perforce to submit to their rule. We had forgotten this first principle in every war, that of destruction, and the day would come when we would rue that such had been the case. I quite sympathised with those opinions of Uncle Frederick Charles, and we sometimes discussed what Germany ought to do in case she should be compelled to draw the sword once more, and be lucky enough again to beat her adversaries. And we came to the conclusion that we ought to insist on retaining possession of the whole French and Belgian coast which we required in order to curtail the power of Great Britain and to assure ourselves a sound naval base. One of our principal aims ought to be the creation of a great

fleet, able to rival the English one and capable of protecting our colonies, and assuring the freedom of our trade. Somehow grandfather has never been so keen on this question of providing Germany with a fleet; and my father has been so entirely persuaded by my mother that it would be quite useless to try to prevent Great Britain from ruling the waves, that he seems to consider as wasted money every mark spent in developing our navy. Neither Uncle Frederick Charles nor myself has ever shared this point of view. It has seemed to us, on the contrary, that there lay a great future for our country in the organisation of our naval forces on as strong a footing as our militia, and I know that as soon as I ascend the throne I shall apply myself to execute a wide programme in regard to our fleet, which, with the help of God, I shall hope to be enabled to fulfil within a relatively short time.

I repeat once more, I regret my uncle's death very much indeed. His disappearance leaves the world the poorer by the loss of one of its great men. He was one of those heroes without whom the German Empire could never have been built or organised. He was also a true soldier, one who never saw further than his sword, and who knew how to use it.

The death of Field Marshal von Manteuffel is

another matter. He was also one of the heroic figures of an heroic time. But he was more a politician than a great general, in spite of the high rank he had acquired in the army and of the ability he had displayed on various occasions. Everybody liked him, and whilst in command of the army of occupation in France he had displayed an unusual amount of tact, which had prevented many of the anticipated frictions. But Prince Bismarck detested him. It was said that he feared to find in him a possible future Chancellor of the German Empire; but of course this suspicion had no foundation, because the Prince is very well aware that so long as my grandfather and father occupy the throne his own position is quite secure. It will also be secure with me, though I wonder sometimes how I shall be able to bear with the despotic temperament of our great man. However, this is a matter for the future to decide. For the present what is important is the disappearance of Manteuffel, which leaves Alsace and Lorraine without a Governor General. Who will be appointed in his stead? The position would suit me so well. First, it would prove to the inhabitants of our new Reichsland that we consider them as so worthy of attention that it has been thought useful to give them as governor a member of the Royal

House. Then again I could make in the annexed provinces a probation of my future duties as a Sovereign. Then it would remove me from Berlin and the ever-growing hostility and displeasure of my parents, who decidedly cannot bring themselves to consider me as being on a footing of equality with themselves and entitled to opinions of my own. I thought a good deal about all these things, and at last went to seek the advice of Prince von Bismarck, as I usually do when I find myself in some difficulty. What was my surprise when he told me that as soon as he had heard of the death of Field Marshal von Manteuffel he had made up his mind that the best person who could be appointed in his place would be myself. He had in consequence presented a report to the Emperor on the subject, and he was awaiting his reply. He advised me in the meanwhile to say nothing and to keep perfectly quiet for the next few days. I cannot say how grateful I feel to the Prince and with what impatience I shall watch the further developments of this incident. I feel quite sure in my mind that I can acquit myself of my duties as Representative of the Emperor in the newly acquired provinces to the latter's satisfaction, and my residence near the French frontier would allow me to take a more careful survey than Manteuffel has done,



for he was all along swayed and influenced by his strong French sympathies. Also I could keep in touch with what is going on across the frontier and become acquainted with Frenchmen of note who come to visit their relatives in Alsace or Lorraine, and I could try to ingratiate myself in their favour. I am not quite sure as to my eventual attitude in regard to the annexed provinces after I have ascended the throne, and it seems to me sometimes that this will depend very much on any personal observations which I may make concerning the spirit which pervaded them previous to the day when the supreme authority will at last be vested in my hands. Perhaps I shall try a policy of conciliation, and perhaps not. All depends on circumstances, and this is one of the reasons why I should be so anxious to try in the meanwhile to make myself acceptable to our new subjects by showing myself a just and careful governor.

*June 19th, 1885.*

To-day I called on Madame X—— and discussed with her this question of governorship of Alsace-Lorraine. To my surprise she asked me whether I had mentioned the subject to my father. I replied: "Of course not," to which she said that

she feared he would be quite opposed to the idea. This contingency had never crossed my mind, and I will own that I was quite dismayed by it. When I asked her to tell me what made her take such a view of the matter she refused to explain herself further, and merely remarked that time would show whether she was right or not, and in the meanwhile she promised me not to mention to any one what I had just confided to her. I know that she will keep her word, but I confess that I have been made very uneasy by her reserve. I decided accordingly to go again to consult Prince von Bismarck, who, upon seeing me, said that he had been on the point of writing to ask me to come to him, as he had received a reply from the Emperor on the report which he had presented to him a few days ago. He showed me this reply, in which grandfather says that he would have been very willing to send me to Strasburg, but that just before the Prince's communication had reached him the Crown Prince had come to see him, and asked him to appoint him Governor General of the annexed provinces in succession to Manteuffel, that the idea had not appealed to him as he did not think it was a position which the Heir-apparent to the Throne ought to hold, and he had told my father so. He feared that, though the case was quite different,

the Crown Prince would feel it as a personal affront if I, his son, should be given an appointment which he had asked for and which had been refused him. I began to understand what Madame X—— had meant when she had warned me that my father would not approve of my being sent to Strasburg. I enquired from Prince von Bismarck what was to be done. The Chancellor said that he should make it a point to see the Emperor himself and to get him to accept our point of view, and also to try to explain to my father the reasons which would make his presence in the annexed lands undesirable and which, on the contrary, would be in favour of my being sent there.

*June 21st, 1885.*

All is over, and I owe to my father the bitterest disappointment I have ever had in my life, or, rather, I owe it to my mother, because it was she who finally persuaded the Emperor not to sanction the proposition of Prince von Bismarck to appoint me in the place of Manteuffel. At first things had gone smoothly, and the order for my transfer to Strasburg had been prepared and submitted for the Sovereign's signature. Then my mother, who had heard all about it—I do not yet know through whom, though I suspect Ma-

dame X—— was the traitor who brought this disaster upon me—my mother persuaded my father to go to the Emperor and tell him that he would never consent to my being given a responsible position for which he had himself pleaded all his life and which he had never been able to obtain. The Emperor considered that, after all, the Crown Prince was my father and had something to say in the matter, and that he would decidedly object to my being put, so to say, over his head and would forbid me to think of such a position. Grandfather has always been an upholder of authority, especially of parental authority, and he finally yielded, and promised the Crown Prince not to sanction the appointment. I think he made a sacrifice in thus yielding, but this does not alter matters. The fact remains that my own parents have stood in my way and refused to give me the opportunity of my life; and I know that I shall never forgive my mother for the part she has played in this whole affair. I have always known that she did not love me, and I feel to-day that my instinct in this matter was right.

*June 25th, 1885.*

I had a long conversation with my father this afternoon concerning this Strasburg affair. I

asked him point-blank what had made him interfere in this matter and take such a decided attitude in regard to it. He replied that for one thing he did not consider it wise for the future German Emperor to be put in a position where everything he did would be made the subject of violent criticism from one side or another. A Prince standing in the direct line of succession ought to remain an unknown quantity for the public, and ought, when he steps upon the throne, to do so untrammelled and unhampered by any remembrance as to his past political opinions or actions. He added that at present he understood the motives which had actuated the King in past times to refuse him a share in the government of the country, and that he had come now to the conclusion that it had been a wise thing to do; that he did not see any reason to change his opinion because the question of what I would like or dislike came to be discussed. He said this quite coldly, and I fancy that he was not sorry to let me guess that I had better make up my mind that I should not be allowed a free hand in regard to politics so long as he had anything to say in regard to them. I am afraid my father means to be a hard father to me when he is Emperor, and I feel sure that it is my mother who is at the bottom of this intention of his. I wonder

whether they can be jealous of me. If so, this explains perhaps the great affection which both grandfather and Prince Bismarck show to me.

*March 6th, 1886.*

I am sorry to say that my father is ill and that the doctors are rather uneasy about him. It is only an attack of measles which has been epidemic this winter; among society people especially it has raged with unusual virulence. Of course the illness in itself is nothing, but when it attacks adults it is apt to have unpleasant consequences. The fact of the matter is that for three days there has been reason to be anxious about the Crown Prince, whom the disease has stricken with particular violence. To-day Doctor Leuthold told me that he feared the convalescence might be a tedious affair, because at fifty-five years of age it is more difficult than in youth to throw off the disease. I am sure that I do not wish in the least for my father's death, but I could not help wondering what would happen if he were carried off before the Emperor. The change such an event would make in my position would be enormous, and perhaps it might be the means of adding a few years to grandfather's life by relieving him of a part of his

work. He is too old to give to State affairs the attention which they ought to have, and he does not wish to delegate any part of his authority to the Crown Prince, about the soundness of whose views he does not feel sure. At my father's age it would be impossible to expect him to change his opinions and to give up any of his cherished ideals simply to please the King. With me the case would be entirely different, because I should make it my business to do nothing capable of displeasing either my grandfather or Prince Bismarck, and what a weight the knowledge that such was the case would lift from the Emperor's mind and shoulders! As regards the German Empire also, it might be to its advantage to have a young ruler—one who would not be hampered in his actions by the remembrance of all that had existed before our triumphs in 1866 and 1870 had put Prussia at the head of Germany and made her its leading State.

Evidently the same thought has occurred to other people, because all the military attendants on the Emperor begin to treat me with unusual respect and deference. Well, I am sure I wish my father to recover as soon as possible, but I wish also he would at least consider me and my feelings a little more than he does. After all, I am no longer a child; I have three children of

my own, three sons, too; and my opinions ought to carry weight. But neither of my parents seems to have given this fact a thought. Altogether my position is daily growing more difficult, and I do not wish to think what it may yet be, should the Crown Prince become Emperor and thus be able to impose his authority upon me with more possibilities to enforce it than is the case at present.

*May 26th, 1886.*

I had a great shock to-day. My friend, Colonel von Lyncker, told me that he had spoken with Professor Bergmann, who has been called in consultation concerning my father's health. It seems that the cure he made in Ems was not entirely effective for he has not lost the hoarseness from which he has more or less suffered ever since the attack of measles which he had two months ago. The Professor did not at all like the symptoms which he observed, but he did not say anything definite, as he thought it rather premature. I asked Lyncker to find out what it was that really ailed the Crown Prince, but he replied that this would be difficult, as there was evidently a desire to hide the truth from the public. I must confess that I feel very worried.



*March 23d, 1887.*

Yesterday we celebrated the ninety-first anniversary of my grandfather's birth. I believe that every single German Prince belonging to either a royal or a mediatised house, with the exception of the Prince Regent of Bavaria, came to Berlin for this great occasion. Grandfather is absolutely wonderful. He has kept all his vitality and all the freshness of his intellect, and jested with us when we came to offer him our congratulations, saying that he had begun to hope he would see his hundredth birthday before we were done with him. He looked infinitely better than my father, who has aged considerably and whose throat seems to be hurting him with a persistence which is quite annoying. He speaks in a whisper, so low that one can hardly hear him. I wonder what it means. The doctors want to send him again to Ems, though it did not seem to do him much good last year, but they hope, nevertheless, that the catarrh from which he has not been able to recover will yield to continued treatment. He is to start to-morrow, though it is rather early in the season, but he has rather over-tired himself all through this winter, and it may be that he needs rest more than anything else.

*May 30th, 1887.*

I am so worried, so tormented, so troubled in my mind that I have not been able to do anything this whole day. There took place yesterday another consultation in regard to the state of my father's health. Bergmann was once more summoned, and he declared that he thought it imperative to proceed with a slight operation in order to remove a growth from my father's throat. Professor Gerhardt was also of the same opinion. I know the latter well, and I had asked him to come and report to me privately the result of the consultation. He has just done it, and told me what I had suspected all along—that my father is attacked by cancer of the larynx. Of course the entire removal of that organ may allow him to live for some years longer, but what an existence it will be: unable to speak and to express himself otherwise than by signs! What a position for a monarch to find himself in! I am very unhappy. I love my father; but I love my country more, and it seems to me that it would not be to the advantage of the latter to be ruled by an infirm Sovereign. I could not help myself, and I went to discuss the matter with Prince Bismarck. I found that the latter had already been informed as to the real state of things, but he did not seem as troubled as I

would have supposed. He is such a great man that he remains unmoved before the catastrophes of life and accepts them in a true sporting spirit. We discussed the question as to whether grandfather ought to be told the truth, and the Prince said that he most certainly should be informed as to the opinion of the doctors, and then that an ultimate decision as to what ought to be done should be left for him to take alone, unhampered by advice from any one. I asked the Chancellor what he meant by these words, but he would not explain himself. I feel very sorry for my father, and I would like him to give great attention to the state of his health and not to think of anything else. If I were in his place I would most certainly abdicate my eventual right to the succession in favour of my heir, and spend the rest of my life nursing myself and living in a warm climate. I said something to that effect to Bismarck, but the latter replied that he felt convinced my father had too strong a sense of duty to give up his rights to the Crown, so long as he had sufficient breath in him to take the burden of the monarchy on his shoulders. I cannot understand this. What has duty got to do in the matter? It will not alter the sad seriousness of facts as they present themselves to us. I said something of this to the Emperor, whom I saw in the

afternoon, but he also seemed to share the opinion of Prince Bismarck, and he even looked displeased when I suggested that perhaps it would be better for the Crown Prince always to winter abroad now that his health seemed to be really shattered, and he replied, rather sharply, that a Prussian Prince never deserted the post in which he had been put by Providence, and that he would never suggest to my father to make light of any of the duties which his position imposed upon him. Of course after that I said nothing more, but I am wondering what will happen with the projected journey of my parents to England for the jubilee of Queen Victoria. I wonder whether they will undertake it under the present circumstances. If they do not, I suppose that the Emperor will send me in their place.

*June 10th, 1887.*

We have an English doctor, a specialist for throat diseases, called Morrel Mackenzie, who has been summoned from London and who is attending upon my father. He declares that the growth which has formed in the latter's larynx is not malignant and that it will give way to treatment. And really the Crown Prince seems

better since that man has begun to take care of him. His voice is clearer and his general appearance healthier. He is going to London with my mother, and after the jubilee festivities they are to proceed to the Isle of Wight to stay there a few weeks. But I am also to go to London for the jubilee, and this makes me very happy. I have always loved my grandmother, Queen Victoria, and I feel sure that later on, when I shall find myself placed in a position of equality with her, our relations will become quite warm and intimate.

*Berlin, July 6th, 1887.*

I returned from England very satisfied with all that I saw and found there, with the exception of my uncle, the Prince of Wales, who treated me very badly indeed. I do not know whether my mother had complained to him about me or not, but he thought himself justified in reading me a lecture as to my conduct in regard to my parents which he described as unfeeling. Why? I am sure I have always shown myself respectful in regard to my father and mother, and if any one has anything to complain of it is myself, because I am sure that no man of my age has been treated more unjustly or suspected more wrongly

than I have been. However, I suppose that all this cannot last long and that my day is coming at last. Others seem to feel this, too, even abroad, because Queen Victoria, with her usual good sense, spoke to me very kindly indeed, and without mentioning the subject of my father's health gave me to understand that she knew the truth. Here I find myself a personage of importance indeed, not only in regard to my own household, who seem to have made up their minds that a great future is opening before me in quite an unexpected manner, but also among the persons who stand near to my grandfather, such, for instance, as General von Albedyll, the head of the Military Cabinet, who is considered the best informed man in the whole of Germany and whose influence over my grandfather is unbounded. I must of course keep on good terms with the General, but I confess that I do not like him. He has an overbearing temper and has surrounded the Emperor with people of his own choosing, so as to be able to keep his own influence paramount. The army hates him, because all military promotions depend on him, and he only promotes those whom he likes, or his friends, and never looks at the worth of those officers who might make themselves useful or who have real ability. How often has Count von Moltke had to

remonstrate with him because he would not consent to the promotion of some member of the General Staff whom he had recommended to him, simply because he did not like the man or thought him too much imbued with the conviction that another war is indispensable to the welfare of Prussia. General von Albedyll is a pacifist. It is a shame for a Prussian officer to be that, and I blush to have to write it, but it is a fact. If I were the master I would not keep him in his place an hour, but at present, as things stand, I must make up to him and keep in his favour, because he is certainly the one whose opinions count the most with my grandfather. Happily for me, he does not care for the Crown Prince, and I think would not be sorry to see me installed in the latter's place. At all events, General von Albedyll takes good care to accredit everywhere the opinion that the illness of my father is quite incurable. His sister-in-law is the Duchess of Manchester, and through her he gets to hear (or, rather, Madame Albedyll does) all that goes on at the English Court, and it seems that the state of health of the Crown Prince causes much anxiety there.

*November 7th, 1887.*

It has been decided that my father shall winter in San Remo on the Italian Riviera. He spent part of the summer in England, then in Toblach in Tyrol, where, however, he did not feel so well and which proved far too cold for him, and afterwards at Baveno on Lake Maggiore, where he rallied, and where I went to see him. I found him decidedly worse, but my mother will not acknowledge that such is the case, and when I spoke to her about it she became quite excited, and accused me of being a bad son. This angered me, because I feel that I do not deserve this reproach. Of course I am worried to find that my father does not improve, but can this be wrong? I suppose that the so-called friends of my mother, who have always tried to make bad blood between her and myself, have repeated to her that I was busy preparing to step into the Crown Prince's place. There are members of our Court who would wish my father to renounce his rights to the succession in my favour, but I have nothing to do with them. Of course they are right in their wishes, but I shall never make a step to show that I approve of them. I did not, however, say anything concerning this to the Crown Princess, and bore with her sarcasms as well as I could. She seemed surprised that I did not



lose my temper, and point-blank asked me: "Is it true that you have been saying everywhere that your father was so ill that he would never be able to assume the government of his country in the case of the demise of the Emperor?" "No," I replied, "I have never said so, and I shall never say so; but others do." "Who are those others?" exclaimed the Crown Princess. "You surely do not wish me to mention names," I said. "I have nothing to do with those people, and I do not wish to have anything to do with them. But you cannot imagine that such a grave event as an illness of the heir to the throne could pass without arousing discussions and without its consequences being commented upon." "There is nothing to be commented upon," retorted my mother, "and I forbid you mixing yourself up in things which do not concern you." "I beg your pardon," I then said, "but it seems to me that the state of health of my father can concern no one in the world more than myself." "Yes, because you wish to stand in his shoes!" cried the Crown Princess, and she became so excited that she left the room, banging the door behind her. Of course after this when we met again we felt rather constrained in our intercourse, and I left Baveno the next day, very painfully impressed by all that I have seen there, and especially by the

extreme coolness with which my father treated me. He also is disposed against me, and I only wish I knew who has been trying to sow dissension between us. I do not at all like the English doctor Howell who is in attendance upon my father, and I fail to understand why my mother refuses to admit German doctors to see my father. After all, he is the future German Emperor, and he ought not to be abandoned into the hands of foreign medical men. Besides, where could he find any better surgeons than in Berlin, and an authority like Professor Bergmann could surely be of more use to him than a simple practitioner like Doctor Howell.

When I returned here of course I informed the Emperor of what I had seen, but I did not mention my altercation with the Crown Princess. He might have thought that she had good reasons to treat me in such a way. But I spoke about it to Prince Bismarck. The latter seems to be quite satisfied that my father cannot live beyond a few months and consequently does not trouble about what happens now. All his thoughts are engrossed with what I shall have to do when I am Emperor. But he feels anxious as to the fate of my father's numerous papers: the diary which he has kept for years, and other correspondence, the disclosure of which

might prove highly injurious to the interests of the State. The Prince is afraid that my mother has entrusted these documents and papers to her brother, the Prince of Wales, and in that case this might make it disagreeable for us later on, should certain complications which we must keep in view arise. I quite understand the Prince's anxiety, and I share it to a certain degree. I dislike my uncle intensely, and I feel certain that he dislikes me also. I once heard him say that "this young man," meaning me, of course, "will yet cause us a lot of trouble." This was an unwarrantable assertion, but I shall not forget it, and I shall endeavour to cause him in the future more trouble than he bargains for.

But as regards my father's papers I do not quite share Prince Bismarck's apprehensions, because I do not think that he would have allowed them to be sent abroad. Of course should anything happen to him, then anything is possible, and most likely Seckendorff would at once put them where we could not get hold of them. The Crown Princess would hand them over to him for security, for she seems to think that he is her best friend. It is principally for this reason that I think the Emperor ought to insist on the Crown Prince being brought home, so as to die in Germany and not abroad. Climate has nothing to do

with his illness, and the interests of the State would make it imperative for us all to be at hand when the end comes. The Chancellor, however, assures me that he has taken every precaution to be advised as soon as any change for the worse takes place in my father's condition, when of course I would go over, wherever he might happen to be.

*January 3d, 1888.*

The new year began very sadly for us all. For one thing, my grandfather seems to be getting weaker. He worries about the Crown Prince, and of course this tells on an old man who has reached his advanced age. He has expressed a wish that I should interest myself more in the affairs of the State than has been the case heretofore. But a proposal of the Chancellor that I should be given a military adviser and be allowed to discuss together with him questions relating to the army or to the administration, has not been approved by him, because he feared that were such a thing to become known, my father might become painfully affected in finding that I was permitted to do what had been persistently refused to himself. The Emperor does not care to grieve the Crown Prince. But at the same time he has given his approval to an order au-

thorising me in certain cases to sign State papers for him, such, for instance, as officers' patents, and other things of like importance. This order has not been made public so far, but it has been acted upon; and I am of course very grateful to my grandfather for this proof of his confidence in me. After a consultation with the Empress it has been decided that the Court balls which generally take place during the winter season shall be held as usual. We do not wish to alarm the public in regard to the Crown Prince's state of health, and he also has expressed a wish to this effect, and indeed took the initiative in begging the Emperor to change nothing in a programme of the winter festivities, so as not to disappoint the numerous young girls whose first season this is to be. This is very kind and considerate on his part, and I feel sure that the public will appreciate it.

*February 10th, 1888.*

My father's condition has grown suddenly so much worse that the surgeon had almost at a moment's notice to perform on him the operation called tracheotomy, which alone prevented him from being suffocated. I forgot to write here that during the consultation which took place

immediately after the Crown Prince had arrived in San Remo, a consultation in which Professor Schroder from Vienna took part, it was decided that in case of emergency this operation was to be performed, and that Dr. Bramann, the assistant of Professor Bergmann, had remained in San Remo, to be at hand should a complication occur. My father was then told the real nature of the disease from which he suffered. It was Professor Schroder who undertook the painful task of acquainting him with the truth. It seems that my father behaved quite heroically and took the news without flinching. My mother, too, remained quite calm. But I think they had both known for a long time what was really the matter, and they had voluntarily shut their eyes to the truth, or at least refused to admit it before others. Of course their position is a dreadful one, and I can quite well understand how they feel about it. I would not care to be subjected to such a terrible trial. But, on the other hand, since this calamity has fallen upon them, they ought to realise that it is useless to struggle against it, and that a dumb Emperor would be an anomaly, and might even prove a hindrance in the administration of the affairs of the State. However, for the present things cannot be al-

tered. I only hope that my grandfather may hold out for some months longer at least.

Another misfortune befell us the other day. Louis of Baden, Aunt Louise's youngest son, died from congestion of the lungs after only a few hours' illness. He was grandfather's favourite, and the old man has been more affected by this loss than by my father's illness. For three hours he remained shut up in his room, refusing to speak to anybody, and at last we became so anxious, especially in view of the fainting fits to which he has been subject during the last ten years or so, that Doctor Leuthold took it upon himself to enter the room without having been summoned. — There he found the Emperor sitting with his head in his hands, looking the picture of misery. I was telephoned for, and of course came at once and tried to cheer him up, though with no great result. But afterwards he rallied, and went upstairs to grandmother, with whom he spent the evening. The next day he seemed better, but remained profoundly sad, which of course can be understood, in view of all the emotions he has had to go through lately. I took it upon myself to write to Aunt Louise, and to ask her to make an effort to overcome her grief and to come here where I am sure her pres-

ence would do good to the Emperor and rouse him from his present state of depression.

*March 6th, 1888.*

Grandfather has been ill since yesterday. It is another attack of the old bladder trouble that has worried him from time to time. Generally he gets over it in a day or two, but now the thing seems more serious, and this morning the doctors considered whether they should administer morphia to him or not. We discussed with General von Albedyll whether we should wire the news to San Remo, and then decided to wait a while, because, after all, grandfather has often been worse than he is to-day, and has pulled through all right. But to our surprise General von Albedyll received during the afternoon a message from the Crown Prince, asking why he had not been informed of the Emperor's illness, and requesting that news might be sent to him immediately. This proves what I had suspected all along, namely, that my father and mother have sources of information of their own, and that some one keeps them posted as to everything that is going on here. Albedyll replied at once that there was nothing alarming in the Emperor's state of health, and that if any complica-



tions should arise he would be the first to communicate the news to the Crown Prince. We composed this telegram together, and decided that no official bulletins concerning the condition of the Emperor should be published, unless a change of some kind should take place. But I cannot help personally feeling anxious, especially on account of a state of drowsiness in which grandfather finds himself since this morning, which is a most unusual thing with him. He scarcely knew me when I visited him to-day, and seemed to want nothing but to be left alone. I have decided not to return to Potsdam, but to remain in town, so as to be at hand should any complications arise.

*March 7th, 1888.*

To-day, to my great relief, Aunt Louise arrived from Carlsruhe. I went to meet her at the station, and gave her what news there was to give. The Emperor is certainly not worse than yesterday, and yet his strength seems to give way, which, considering his great age, is an alarming symptom. But Leuthold says that the heart is in good condition, though this does not mean much, because in cases of this kind it happens sometimes that it gives way without any pre-

monitory signs, and that collapse comes simply on account of old age. I have been considering most seriously my position. Personally I have not much hope that grandfather will recover, and in losing him I shall lose the only person who would have upheld me against my parents. The latter are certainly most hostile in their feelings towards me. It is evident that they labour under the impression that I have intrigued against them. This is not true, though I shall admit that badly intentioned people may have thought that my anxiety to become initiated in the affairs of the government proceeded from the desire to usurp my father's place. Yet such an idea never crossed my mind, though I still think it would be better for Germany if my father abdicated, but this must proceed from his own initiative and not be imposed upon him as Albedyll wished. The latter, who hates both my parents, in spite of the protestations of fidelity which he always pours upon them, really spoke to the Emperor about the necessity of explaining to the Crown Prince that his illness rendered him unfit to ascend the throne, but the Sovereign was exceedingly angry at the suggestion, and declared that he would never be the one to lay his hand on the rights of inheritance of his son. I understand the feeling, and I respect it. The fact remains, however, that

this attempt of Albedyll to put me in my parents' place has somehow reached their ears, and has been attributed to me, instead of to Albedyll. I wish there were not so many people about us all, ready to intrigue, and to sow dissension among us. But it seems as if there was a conspiracy to make me quarrel with my parents. I suspect that the Prince of Wales has a good deal to do with this. He has never liked me, and very probably through the disreputable friends whom he has all over Europe he has heard certain things in an exaggerated form, which he has repeated to his sister, with the result that the Crown Princess has become persuaded that I have been conspiring against her and against my father. If the latter were in sound health I should most probably have a hard time of it, but as things stand it will be only a question of patience, which need not last more than a few months. Grandfather's condition got worse towards the evening, and for the first time Leuthold pronounced it to be critical. Of course everything possible is being done to keep up his strength, but the lamp has no more oil, and it is evident it will go out within a short time

*March 8th, 1888.*

Grandfather is dying. Neither myself nor the doctors have any hope he may last beyond a few hours. To-day Prince Bismarck and I visited him. He was still conscious, and spoke with great affection to the Prince, thanking him for his services "to our Fatherland." Unselfish to the last, he forgot any services which might have been rendered to himself, and all he thought of was Germany. Evidently he still had in mind a conversation I had had with him a few days before his illness, concerning our relations with Russia, a conversation in which I had told him that I was mistrustful of Russian intentions and that I thought the Tsar was planning an alliance with France. I had already suspected this when I visited Alexander III. for the second time at Brest Litovsk, when he had with evident intention pointed out to me how strong this fortress was and how difficult it would be for Russia to be attacked with success by any foe, no matter how strong and powerful, in view of the line of fortifications which from Warsaw defended the Russian border. The Tsar did not seem to think it possible any artillery could demolish his fortresses, and perhaps he was right, but what seems impossible to-day may become feasible to-morrow; and it is of the morrow we ought to be

thinking. I could not help remarking that if Brest Litovsk had been in our hands we might have fortified it even better than it was. But grandfather, when I told him this, became angry, and told me that I must not think of such things, that our interests, indeed the interests of the whole of the world, required that Germany should always remain upon good terms with Russia and the House of Hohenzollern with that of Romanoff. Evidently this conversation must have rankled in his mind, because to-day he spoke about our relations with Russia, and told me that I must never quarrel with the Tsar, because Prussia had no reason to do so, as none of its interests could ever clash with those of Russia. He said the same thing later on to Prince Bismarck, with whom he spoke during a second interview the Chancellor had with him, when he seemed to be in a state of semi-consciousness and evidently mistook the Prince for me. It would be difficult to say how I have been impressed by the solemnity of this death-bed of a Monarch whose name will rank among those of the greatest men Germany has ever given birth to. With him will disappear one of the most imposing figures in the history, not only of our own country, but of the world. I think that I shall never experience such an emotion as the one which shook

my mind and heart when I saw him breathing painfully on the small and narrow camp bed upon which he insisted in sleeping, covered with a well-worn quilt, which he was pulling about from time to time with his white fingers, fingers that looked already as if they were those of a dead man, so yellow and waxy did they seem. At about nine o'clock there was a rally, and I thought I could return to the castle, the doctors telling me that there was no immediate danger to be feared.

*March 9th, 1888.*

William I., King of Prussia and First German Emperor, passed away this morning. During the night he grew rapidly worse and I was sent for in haste. I found on reaching the Palace that Aunt Louise was already in her father's room, and a few minutes afterwards the Empress was wheeled in her bath chair into the apartment and never left it until all was over. My wife soon joined us, and then came Count von Moltke. Grandfather lay perfectly quiet; only from time to time his fingers pressed those of the Empress, who remained near him and who held his hand until the end had come. The dying man did not seem to suffer. He opened his eyes once or twice and murmured a few words. One could hardly

understand him, but I caught those of "great festival in the Cathedral," then again, "do not go to war. I see it now; war is a crime." As the morning broke, he grew weaker and became quite still, only breathing heavily. At eight o'clock he had passed into eternity so quietly that it was only when Doctor Leuthold approached him and closed his eyes that I knew that all was over. We all knelt down beside the bed; then I told the Emperor's valet (who had been in the room the whole time) to open the door, and to let in the dead Sovereign's military household that had been waiting in the next room. I wished them to take a last leave of their old master before he was laid out. Count von Moltke then addressed me, and asked me for my orders. I told him to have the garrison advised immediately of the demise of its Chief, and then to wire to San Remo. I also had the flags of the Guard Regiments, which were standing in my grandfather's study, brought into the bedroom and put around the bed. This was in conformity with his wishes which he had expressed some time ago, and I fancy that Count von Moltke was not quite pleased, because he remarked to me that it was the rule never to touch the flags without an order from the reigning Sovereign. I knew that, of course, but the dead

Emperor's wishes had to be carried out, and I think that my father would not have objected to my having assumed his place on this occasion. Of course if he had been here, I would not have done so. If he had been here! Will he be here? This is what I am wondering. Can he stand the long journey from San Remo?

I also sent one of my grandfather's aides-de-camp, Major von Bülow, to Prince Bismarck to acquaint the latter with the Emperor's death. Albedyll has remained the whole time in the Palace, and I must say behaved very well, coming to me for orders, and, for a wonder, not asserting himself, as I half expected he would have done. At about ten o'clock Prince Bismarck arrived at the Palace. I received him in the Hall, and led him to the death chamber. To my surprise he asked me to leave him alone there with grandfather. When he came out, after something like a quarter of an hour, his eyes were wet, and he seemed to be labouring under an intense emotion. "A very great man has gone, Your Imperial Highness," he said to me, "one without whom I could never have done the great things which I have been able to perform for the good of our country." I thought this a beautiful saying.



*March 10th, 1888.*

We have received news from San Remo. The new Emperor is starting this morning for Germany and will arrive here to-morrow evening. Radolinsky has wired that the intention of my parents is to take up their abode in the Castle of Charlottenburg, where my sister Charlotte's apartments are to be prepared for them. The Ministers are to go to Leipzig, and there meet their new Sovereign. My mother has wired to the Dowager Empress and to my Aunt Louise, and also to her dressmakers, to have mourning garments ready for her and for my sisters. I thought that she must not feel very unhappy if she could think of such things at such a moment. Charlotte was very angry at having to move, but of course there was nothing to do but to obey. The Ministers are also annoyed at having to go to Leipzig, and no one seems to understand why the Emperor wishes it, considering the fact that they could have received him just as well here. Prince Bismarck, however, thinks that he wishes probably to discuss with them certain State measures before his arrival. The Prince himself, though he was told that he need not go to Leipzig unless he so desired, decided to accompany the other members of the Cabinet there, thinking that he would be wanting in respect to

the new Monarch if he failed to do so. He asked me what I intended to do. I replied that if my parents had wished me to go to Leipzig they would have said so, and that therefore, failing any new orders which I might yet get, I would remain in Berlin, and only receive the Emperor at the station of Charlottenburg. The Chancellor seemed to think that I was right. The fact is that I do not wish to intrude myself upon my parents, at least not before I know exactly how they are disposed towards me. Lyncker, who manages to keep himself generally well informed as to all the gossip which goes on in circles devoted to my mother, expressed to me his apprehension that I might be given some command which would take me away from the capital, such for instance as that of Viceroy of Pomerania, an office which, according to Hohenzollern traditions, is always held by the heir to the throne. I would not like this at all, and very probably I would object. It is, however, too early to make any suppositions or plans as to what the future may bring. Perhaps the Emperor will not survive the long journey he has undertaken in spite of the warnings to the contrary which he received from his doctors. And then, of course, everything would be changed.

*March 11th, 1888.*

My father and mother arrived to-night in Charlottenburg. Prince von Bismarck sent me a wire from Leipzig, after having seen the Emperor, in which he said that His Majesty looked much better than could have been expected, but that he had displayed considerable emotion when receiving the Prince and the other Ministers. He had handed to the Chancellor an open letter to his people, which he had composed during his journey, and which he gave orders to publish immediately. And then he had asked different questions concerning the last moments of the late Emperor, and current affairs, of which he seemed to have far more knowledge than Prince Bismarck would have supposed possible, in view of his illness and long absence from home. Not one word concerning myself was said, either by him or by my mother.

This last remark gave me a good deal to think about, and I will confess it was with certain misgivings in my heart that I repaired to the station of Charlottenburg. The train was late, and I had given orders that the transfer of my grandfather's mortal remains from his Palace to the Dom Cathedral, which was fixed to take place during this night, should not be proceeded with, until I had returned to Berlin from Charlotten-

burg together with the military household of the late Sovereign that had also been present at the arrival of the new Emperor. Of course I was dressed in full uniform, and as soon as the train stopped I hurried to the carriage at the window of which I could see my father standing, also in uniform, with the yellow band of the Black Eagle showing through the folds of his military cloak. He seemed to be quite strong, but his features bore a sad and weary expression. A Guard of Honour which was drawn up on the platform presented arms, and for the first time in his life my father was saluted by his troops as their Sovereign. I could see that he was labouring under an intense emotion. But otherwise he made no sign, and when I kissed his hand, he merely bowed his head, whilst my mother simply turned away, with the mere words, "I hope that you are well, Willy," and then she embraced my wife. Altogether the meeting was not very encouraging. But I said nothing and accompanied my parents, though in another carriage, to the Castle of Charlottenburg, where Count von Perponcher received them with much ceremony. It was then that my mother asserted herself in a way that I had never expected. She did not allow me to go up the staircase with my father, and simply dismissed me in the Hall with

the remark that the Emperor was tired, and that I had better see him to-morrow, that, besides, my presence was more needed in Berlin. Of course I could do nothing, but, all the same, this was not at all pleasant. In Berlin, I found that the troops had waited without overcoats, notwithstanding the extreme cold, for something like three hours in the street before the Palace. This made me very angry, and I said so to the General commanding the parade, when the latter told me that he had no orders to take from me, and that he had had to obey such instructions as he had received from his Division Commander. This infuriated me, but here again I found myself powerless. And besides, it was not the moment to show any anger. The body of the dead Emperor was borne out of the House where he had lived for more than fifty-five years, and it was a moment of overpowering solemnity. Though it was one o'clock in the night, the streets were full of people, the women all dressed in mourning, and many among them crying. Truly he was beloved by everybody. I wondered when I saw the simple coffin borne out of the Palace on the shoulders of non-commissioned officers from the First Regiment of Foot Guards what my own funeral would be like, and whether I should be regretted as much as my grandfather

is by his subjects. He was indeed a great Sovereign, and a good man at the same time. He accomplished many great things, but still he did not finish his work, or rather the work of making of Germany the greatest Empire in the world, and another will have to complete it. Will that other one be myself? I hope it will. I hope that I shall occupy in our history as great a place as the first German Emperor who was proclaimed at Versailles. I feel the importance of the moment we are living through; I feel it more than I can express. A chapter in Prussian history has come to an end. What will be the next one? What will the future bring in the way of new triumphs and new conquests to our House? I was given at the station by Prince Bismarck the text of my father's message to his people. It is a wonderful piece of rhetoric, but nothing else, and it certainly does not sufficiently dwell on the services rendered to our country by our incomparable army. It is the message of a man who all through his life has stood against autocracy and militarism on the side of liberalism, and as such I doubt whether it will find a sympathetic echo in the nation. Personally I feel that it would take away something from my father's popularity were it not that everybody knows it is the message of a dy-

ing man, and that consequently it lacks the importance it would have assumed under other circumstances. I shall speak in different terms to my subjects. I shall address them as their King and War Lord, remembering that it was through a continuity of successful wars that Prussia became great and that United Germany was created.

*March 12th, 1888.*

I have had a most painful interview with the Empress. In conformity with the orders she gave me last night in the name of my father, I presented myself this morning at the Castle of Charlottenburg, and was immediately received by the Emperor. He was alone in his study, a room which had been hastily fitted out for him, and he sat at his writing table looking pretty much as usual, but with a large black cravat tied around his neck, and hiding the tube which had been inserted in it after the operation to which he had been obliged to submit. He greeted me coldly but graciously, and spoke with me (if it can be called speaking to write down what one wants to say) principally about grandfather's last moments and the dispositions taken for the funeral. Not one word about politics or State

affairs. The interview did not last long, and then I went to seek my mother. She seemed to be highly incensed against me, and when I asked her the reason of her evident displeasure, she replied that I ought to know, and that she could not be expected to be pleased with the conduct of a son who had intrigued against his father, and who had wished to deprive the latter of the inheritance which belonged to him. I told the Empress that I had never done anything of the kind, when she simply turned her back upon me, with the withering remark that she supposed one lie more or less did not matter to me. I think that if she had not been a woman and my mother, I would have struck her down, for daring to say such a thing. But I shall never, never forgive her, and she will see what it means to offend me, later on, when she is nobody, and I shall have become the master. One thing is certain, I shall never seek to justify myself another time. Let her think what she likes. After all it does not matter to me. Her day will soon be over. It is only a question of patience, and my time will come; sooner perhaps than she thinks.

From Charlottenburg I had to go to the Anhalter Station to receive the Archduke Rudolph, the Austrian heir to the throne, who arrived to represent the Emperor Francis Joseph at my



grandfather's funeral. People have always supposed that we were great friends with the Archduke, but whence this belief has arisen, I really do not know. I have seen more of him perhaps than of other Foreign Princes, and, our ages being the same, we have naturally been comrades; I do not care, however, for the Archduke's mode of living. Rudolph, for one thing, is always under the influence of some woman or other. This is a decided weakness for a future Emperor. I like a pretty face, just as well as he does, but I would not care to allow any feminine power to rule me. A monarch ought to rise above such weakness. I have had mistresses, and once or twice I have fancied myself in love; but though it has happened that I have discussed politics with women, or rather with one woman, I have not given her occasion to think that she could lead me in anything. Then again, Rudolph, I fear, is what the French call "dépravé." This is a weakness in a man, and almost a crime in a future Emperor, who ought to lead a clean life, so as to be able to claim the respect of his subjects and the esteem of his surroundings. Rudolph is clever, this is certain, but is cleverness sufficient when it is not coupled with other qualities?

Then again the Archduke is inordinately proud of his position as heir to the monarchy of the Hapsburgs, and thinks himself superior to everybody. This is also a failing, because after all what have these Hapsburgs (so infatuated with themselves and with the glories of their race) done that could be considered as glorious or wonderful? They have not had one single great man among them, with the exception of the Emperor Charles V., and he owed most of his qualities and genius to his Burgundian blood. He was a grandson of Charles the Bold more than a descendant of the degenerated Ferdinand of Spain, and of the incapable Frederick III. of Austria. After him the Hapsburg blood took the upper hand and we have seen to what poor beings it has given birth. Compare them with us Hohenzollerns, and you will at once notice the difference. When I think of these things I recognise that history after all is just, and the instinct of nations the only thing one ought to consider. It was this instinct which helped the Great Elector, and Frederick II., and my grandfather, to accomplish the great things which they have done, and to create out of the ruins of that old and superannuated Holy German Empire, the new might, which the first German Emperor of our dynasty assumed by the common consent

of all the German Princes at Versailles. I feel so well that our destiny is not yet accomplished, that we have still heroic things and deeds which await us, and that there will be yet many a glorious page to be added to those in which are chronicled the exploits of my dynasty. I am living through moments of supreme importance, such importance as perhaps very few realise, even in Prussia, and I must live up to them. My study of history has taught me that one of the greatest misfortunes a human being can undergo is to be born in great times without having in himself any greatness to meet them. It is a calamity that I hope I shall be spared, and I am going to work with a steadfast purpose towards continuing the traditions of my race and remaining faithful to them. One of the characteristics of the Prussian character is fidelity, and I hope that I am endowed with it. I have been thinking so much these last few days, and remembering all the magnificent actions which have made my grandfather's reign so memorable. I have found that he never forgot a service that had been rendered to him and to our House, and also that he never forgot any insult tendered to a Hohenzollern. Among the many occasions when I have seen him display this spirit of gratitude which never deserted him, I can remember one three

years ago. It was at Babelsberg in summer. I had been asked with my wife to dine with the Emperor and Empress. The day was the 18th of August, the anniversary of the battle of Gravelotte, where our troops distinguished themselves so magnificently. Among the guests, was General Lestock, who, on that fateful day, had been the Colonel in command of the First Regiment of Foot Guards, at the head of which he remained during the French campaign. When the champagne was handed round, the King got up and spoke a few words, which will remain imprinted in my heart as long as I live. He reminded the assistants of the bloody struggle that had taken place fifteen years before, and of the valour displayed by the army, and he said how many reasons he had to feel thankful to Providence who had allowed him to witness such a triumph over the nation that had made us drink to the dregs the cup of humiliation at Iéna; he, who had seen his mother, the Queen Louise, weep alone and forsaken in the miserable little room at Memel where she had found a refuge when the hand of the Corsican adventurer had lain so heavily over our country. And then he stretched out his hand to Lestock, saying that he knew he was indebted for all his successes to our valiant army, and that he was happy to be

able to express to it his gratitude as well as to his faithful First Regiment of Foot Guards. Lestock in reply kissed the Sovereign's hand, and raising his glass in his turn called for three cheers for the King. The whole scene was strikingly impressive, and I can see my grandfather standing up, and hear the tone of his voice, when he spoke about the bravery of our army. He was right. In Prussia it is the army that is everything. It is the army to whom the country owes its greatness, and when I think that my father does not realise it in the same sense I do, and the late Emperor did, then I cannot help thinking that Providence or God, our German God, knows what He did, when He ordained that he should not be allowed to wear for any length of time the crown won by the Hohenzollerns with such efforts, and thanks to so much perseverance, and steadfast exercise of will.

*March 20th, 1888.*

I am now beginning to gather together my wits after all the emotions of the last fortnight. The mortal remains of our great Emperor have been laid to rest in the Charlottenburg Mausoleum, beside those of his parents, and Queen Louise has been at last avenged. Our foreign

guests have gone, and we are trying to settle down to what will be our life for the next few weeks, or months, as God may ordain. I have been several times to Charlottenburg, but, though it is evident that my father is losing strength with each day that goes by, yet he will keep on fulfilling the many duties of a Sovereign just as if he were in good health. He often sees Prince Bismarck, who shows himself extremely considerate and kind. He also receives the daily reports of Albedyll and Wilmowski, and takes an enormous interest in all the affairs of the government. One of the first things he did after the funeral of grandfather was to send a Field Marshal's Staff to General von Blumenthal, who had been the head of his staff during the Austrian as well as the French campaigns. Radolinsky was also created Prince Radolin, which I think did not please my mother, who has never looked upon him with lenient eyes, having suspected him, and this not without reason, of having been the channel through which Prince Bismarck was kept informed as to all that was going on in the then Crown Prince's household. But my father holds to the maxim that the "King ought not to remember the wrongs done to the Duke of Orléans," to quote the old saying of Louis XII. of France, and he insisted on rewarding Rad-

olinsky for the services which the latter had rendered to his enemies. When I write this it must not be supposed that I consider Prince Bismarck to be, or to have been, my father's enemy. But they certainly did not agree, and I am wondering whether they will agree in the future. At least I should wonder, if I did not know that there is no future for my father in prospect. He shows an uncommon amount of heroism, knowing as he does that his days are numbered, and he never fails for one single moment in any of the constant small duties which his position imposes upon him. My mother I see but seldom. She has adopted the custom of leaving the room whenever I come to see my father. Evidently she thinks that she can rely upon the Emperor not to show any affection for me, and that she knows he is too deeply offended with me ever to return to the old terms of intimacy which formerly existed between us, especially before the Strasburg incident. With other people she is more careful, because my father never sees any one without her being present, and I hear that the Ministers have complained about this to Prince Bismarck, saying that they were not used to present their reports to the Sovereign in the presence of a third person. My mother says she has to be with her husband in order to ex-

plain his wishes more quickly than if he had always to write, which often tires him. And he cannot speak at all. But this explanation has satisfied nobody, and people fail to appreciate the motives put forward by the Empress.

What worries me most is the idea that my father's papers may go astray. My mother also keeps documents which I should like to see destroyed. For instance, she has during the last year, and ever since my father's condition became grave, entertained a brisk correspondence with some of her friends in Berlin and elsewhere. And I feel convinced she had been told a lot of things concerning myself which are either untrue or monstrously exaggerated. I would not care for these letters to fall into the hands of badly intentioned people. I would not care for this record of my actions to be used one day against me. The difficulty is how to get hold of those papers, which I greatly fear my mother has entrusted to her brother, the Prince of Wales, who, I feel convinced, would not hesitate one single moment to use them against me if he thought in that way to further British interests. I shall try to speak about this with Queen Victoria who I hear is coming here next month to see my father and mother. The latter is eagerly looking forward to this visit, which is an event of con-



siderable importance, even from the European and International point of view. I think my mother hopes that the Queen will side with her against me, but personally I have no such dread. The Queen is fond of me in her way, and besides she is far too shrewd not to realise that within a short time I shall be the German Emperor, and, as such, an individual with whom it would not be wise to quarrel. The old lady has always been an opportunist.

*April 2, 1888.*

Yesterday was the birthday of Prince Bismarck. I dined at his house, and of course proposed his health in a speech which I tried to make as effusive as possible. Among the things which I said was that the German Empire to-day was in the position of an army that had lost its chief, and whose second in command lay mortally wounded, so that only the standard bearer remained to lead it, and that at the present hour this standard bearer was our great chancellor, to whom Germany owed its unity; so I called upon the assistants to give three cheers in his honour. The speech was afterwards commented upon in all the different newspapers, and I hear that both my father and mother were terribly

offended at my having said that the former lay mortally wounded. They called the allusion a deplorable want of tact, and other people shared this opinion, I cannot understand why. I only spoke the truth, and I fail to see why I should have been expected to think of other people's feelings. My father knows quite well that he cannot live, and he ought to have felt thankful that I tried to win the favour of Prince Bismarck, whose advice of course will be most useful to me at the beginning of my future reign.

*June 1st, 1888.*

My father had grown gradually worse, and, though he was able to be moved to Potsdam to-day, yet it is evident that the end is drawing near. There has been any amount of trouble in our family during the last few weeks. First there cropped up the question of the marriage of my sister Vicky with Prince Alexander of Battenberg. She has been in love with him for a long time, but Prince Bismarck thought that such an alliance would only rouse the antagonism of the Tzar, and might involve Germany in complications he did not think it advisable to provoke. So he persuaded my grandfather to refuse his consent, which the latter did. After my father's

accession, my mother took up the idea again, and together with Vicky had almost persuaded the Emperor not to withhold his approval of a marriage on which Vicky's heart was set. The Chancellor then interfered once more, with the result that there took place violent scenes between him and the Empress. I must say that I do not quite see what makes the Prince so averse to this match. He fears complications with Russia, but would it not perhaps be just as well to have at hand a justifiable pretext of quarrel with the latter power at a given moment? Bismarck does not see this, or will not see it. He is now all afire for the consolidation of our good understanding with the Tzar, and when I asked him why he had then entered into our alliance with Austria he replied to me that at the time he had done so things had been very different from what they are now, refusing to explain further. My mother hoped that Queen Victoria, who really came to Berlin, might be able to talk over our great Minister, but to her surprise, the old lady after a long interview with the Prince which lasted over one hour and a half, entirely went over to his point of view, and explained to both my mother and father that, in the interests of European peace, it would be best that Vicky should forget her Battenberg lover, to which

opinion at last my father was won over. Of course tears were shed in abundance, and I fancy that my mother was very much disappointed in the visit of the Queen, in whom she did not find the support she had expected. The latter had also a long talk with me, when I tried to explain to her that I was not quite the black sheep I had been painted. We parted very affectionately, but her last advice to me was, to my great surprise, that I should go and pay a visit to the Tzar as soon as I decently could after I had become Emperor. She spoke about that eventuality far more openly than I ever imagined she would do. No one in the whole world has more tact and more political foresight than this English grandmother of mine.

We had also another trouble to contend with and that was my father's quarrel with Minister von Puttkamer which originated in the interference of the latter in the elections to the Prussian Chamber. My father refused to sanction it, and he dismissed the Minister in a curt and authoritative manner which surprised everybody. But the annoyance that this incident occasioned him had a bad influence on his health, and he began to get daily weaker afterwards. Prince von Bismarck, whose relative Puttkamer is, thought it advisable to ask the latter to dinner, in order

to make up to him for all the unpleasantness which he had had to bear, and he begged me to attend this dinner. I accepted the invitation, because it is most important for me to be at present on excellent terms with the Prince, in view of what may happen immediately after my father's death; but if he thinks that I shall recall Puttkamer and give him another portfolio he is very much mistaken. It would be an insult to my father's memory if I did so, and besides I do not care to have for Minister a man entirely devoted to the Chancellor, who already is but too apt to fancy that "l'Etat, c'est moi," and to forget that there is also a King in Prussia and an Emperor in Germany.

*June 14th, 1888.*

Complications have arisen in the condition of the Emperor, and Dr. Bramann has just told me that now it is but a matter of a few hours before the end comes. He can hardly breathe, and is obliged to be fed artificially. But his intellect remains as bright as ever, and he insisted yesterday on seeing King Oscar of Sweden, who had come to Potsdam without any hope of being sympathy. It is a wonderful deathbed, and I received, but with the intention of offering his

cannot help admiring the courage and energy with which the Emperor fights against the terrible fate that has overcome him. At the same time I feel that in removing him God is showing once more that he watches over Germany and does not mean that the great work accomplished by my grandfather shall be compromised. With all his great qualities the present Emperor is not the Sovereign that Germany requires, and there are reasons to dread that under his reign this spirit of militarism, to which we are indebted for all our greatness, might collapse, or at least be endangered. My father, apart from the fact that he believes in a liberal constitutional way of governing, would encourage science, art, literature, and social work of every kind, rather than militarism which he abhors as he abhors war in general, for the magnificent side of militarism has never appealed to him. I am also a pacifist in so far that I think war ought to be avoided by all means, so long as one is not ready for it. But I do hold that the first duty of a Prussian Monarch is to keep alive those martial traditions to which we owe the greatness of our country.

I am now wondering what is to be done as regards my father's papers. The moment he is dead I shall be the master, and I shall have the

right to demand them from my mother. But if she has sent them to England, I shall find myself powerless. There is, however, just a chance that she will not have done so before the Emperor has passed away, for fear he should ask to see any of them. I think, therefore, that I ought at least to ensure myself against the contingency that she may try to smuggle these papers away after the end has come. After considering this question very seriously I decided to telephone to the barracks of my regiment orders to remain in readiness to come to the New Palace as soon as called for by me. I shall have the place guarded and forbid any one to enter or leave it. And then I shall begin negotiations with my mother concerning these documents, which I shall try at least to obtain from her by fair means, without being compelled to resort to violence, which I should hate to do.

*June 15th, 1888.*

The Emperor Frederick III. passed away at twelve-fifteen this morning, and I am now Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia. The end was quite peaceful. Prince Bismarck was in the room, the Emperor having requested his presence an hour or two before his death, when

he was summoned in haste from Berlin and remained with us until the end. My father, who could hardly breathe, put my mother's hand into that of the Prince, as if to commend her to his care, to which he responded by kissing her hand with great respect. I was very much hurt by this gesture of the dying Sovereign. Did he think that I, his successor and his son, would not know how to care for the Dowager Empress? However, we must let that pass, together with so many other things. I ought not to trouble myself about what is gone by, but rather to look ahead. After the Emperor had breathed his last my mother remained kneeling by his bed for such a long time that we feared she had fainted and I made a sign to my brother Henry to try and raise her, which he did, when she stood up on her feet with an expression on her countenance such as I had never seen, and hope never to see again. I approached her, and offered her my arm, when she stepped back in horror, with the exclamation, "Don't touch me, don't touch me, not just now."

Of course I withdrew, but I think it was very cruel of my mother to insult me in such a manner at such a moment. My brother led her away, and I gave some instructions as to what ought to be done with the body previous to the post mortem examination which, in spite of the



entreaties to the contrary I feel sure my mother will make, I am determined shall take place. It is in accordance with the traditions of the House of Hohenzollern, and besides in the present case there are powerful State reasons which make it imperative that the exact cause of my father's death should be ascertained in an official manner. I shall have the funeral solemnised as soon as possible, in view of the nature of the disease to which the Emperor has succumbed, and of the season of the year. I was discussing all these matters with Prince Bismarck in a corner of the death chamber, near one of its windows opening on to the lawn in front of the Palace, when the door was pushed aside, and my mother appeared once more upon the threshold. She had two hectic spots on her cheeks and she was carrying a wreath of laurels which had always hung over my father's writing table, and which she had herself brought to him when he returned to Berlin after the French campaign, together with his sword. She walked straight to the bed upon which the body lay, just as it had been when the last breath had passed out of it, and she put the wreath, together with the sword, in the hand of the dead man, trying to close the fingers upon them. Then she bent over him and kissed his brow, leaving the room again

after she had done so, without once looking either at me or at Prince Bismarck, who had watched this scene in silence, but with considerable attention.

I hated all this, and so I went out of the apartment in my turn, leaving nurses and doctors in charge of it, and I instantly had my regiment summoned from its barracks. When it got to the Palace, which was in an incredibly short time, I gave the officers strict orders to occupy all the issues, and not to allow any one to leave, except by my special permission. The Major in command asked me whether this order referred also to the now widowed Empress, to which I replied that of course it did. My mother will not like it, but I consider it imperative to take every possible precaution against her disposing of my father's papers. What was therefore my surprise when, late in the evening, I was told that Prince Bismarck, who had returned to Berlin after lunch, was again in Potsdam, and asked to see me at once on urgent business. It seemed so extraordinary he should do so a few hours after he had left me that I imagined some event of supreme importance had taken place and of course I immediately received him. I was more than astounded when he told me that he wanted to know whether it was true I had put my own

mother under arrest. Of course I had done nothing of the kind, and it is not putting any one under arrest to prevent them from going out of their rooms. But the Prince did not see things in the same way, and said that I could not, no matter what provocation I had received, begin my reign with a scandal in my family; that it had reached his knowledge that the widowed Empress had wished to go out on the terrace in front of her apartments to gather some roses which she wanted to put on my father's bed, and that an officer had taken her by the arm and compelled her to return to the house. The Chancellor seemed quite indignant, and he asked me what the Queen of England would think or say when she heard of the manner in which her daughter had been treated. "Your Majesty will achieve nothing in acting in a way which will rouse against you the indignation of the whole of Europe. Besides," he added, "this scandal will not bring you nearer to the accomplishment of your wishes. If the Empress intended to put the papers of the late Emperor in safety, she has done so long ago. I shall never sanction such treatment being offered to the widow of my Sovereign, and rather than allow any one to think that I have been privy to it, I shall resign my functions."

What could I do then? I had to retract the orders which I had given to my officers, but this is one of the things which Prince Bismarck shall have to answer for, later on, when I shall find myself at last free to do what I like, even in regard to him.

This same night I myself wrote out my first address to my army and to my navy. My father had published a proclamation to his people, and only after that had spoken to his soldiers. I thought it, at the time, an error, which I made up my mind to avoid. The army has my entire confidence; I have said this more than once, and it had also that of my reverend grandfather. It was a slight on the part of the Emperor Frederick to forget its services, and to put it, so to say, on the second plane, after the German people. I am going to show it that I hold different ideas as to this important question. The army will become the first object of my solicitude, and I am going to look into its organisation and interests with the zeal that such a grave matter deserves. The nation must get to realise, and this as quickly as possible, that it must give way to the army, and that I consider the army before I do my un-uniformed subjects.

*June 23, 1888.*

I am thankful to say that the ceremonies connected with my father's funeral are at last at an end, and all the foreign guests who had come to Berlin to attend it are gone. I had an altercation with the Prince of Wales who had the insolence to begin talking with me about my mother, and who reproached me, in his name and in that of the Queen, for the way in which I had treated her. I tried to keep my temper and to tell this meddler that if my English grandmother had reasons to be dissatisfied with my conduct I was sure that she would have told me so herself, and not have delegated her authority to the Prince, whose position was so infinitely below my own. I am sure my uncle will never forgive me for this, but then I shall never forgive him for his interference in a matter that did not concern him in the least. Even before he had left Potsdam I sent Colonel von Lyncker, whom I have appointed Head of my new Household, to the widowed Empress to notify her that I mean in the future to live in the new Palace myself and that I expected her to remove herself and her belongings as soon as possible. But when Lyncker tried to fulfil my commands he found that the Empress had already retired to Bornstedt, to the little cottage which she had sometimes occu-

pied with my father during the hot days of summer, and that all her things were being packed with all dispatch and sent to her Berlin Palace. I was glad of that, because in a certain sense it spared me the annoyance of telling my mother that I required the use of my own house, but on the other hand I felt sorry not to be able to make her feel that I was at last the master, and that it was now my turn to order her about, in the same way as she had continually tried to order me.

These first days of my reign are very solemn ones. I cannot say that they are pleasant. What especially displeases me is the fact that every one seems to think that I am going to be a mere puppet in the hands of Bismarck. No one acknowledges more than I do the immense services which the Prince has rendered to our Fatherland; but he is an old man, with the most important moments of his career behind him, whilst I am just beginning mine. Of course I shall always show myself deferential in regard to him, but I do not care to be considered as his tool or as his servant. I am the King, and he ought to be the first to remember this fact. We had our first serious conversation the other day, when I called upon him in Berlin, previous to his departure for Friedrichsruhe,

where he likes to spend his summers. He began by reminding me of my grandfather's last words, to remain always upon good terms with the Emperor of Russia, and he advised me to go and present my respects to the latter as soon as possible. I agreed that this would be a wise thing to do, but I decidedly objected to any renewal of our former intimacy with the Court of St. Petersburg. For one thing I am persuaded that the Tzar himself would not care for it, and then I cannot admit that we should show ourselves untrue to Austria, after having signed the treaty which binds us to the Dual Monarchy. This treaty was entirely the work of Prince Bismarck, and I fail to understand why he should wish to see it abolished to-day. I do not trust Russia, or any feelings of friendship she may profess to hold in regard to Germany. My wish would be, on the contrary, to isolate the Muscovite Empire from every other nation in Europe, and to try if possible to conciliate France. This policy of mine, which I mean to bring into action at the first opportunity, does not appeal to my Chancellor who calls it the dream of a young man. I had never noticed it before, but it seems to me now that he thinks the German Empire ought to be consolidated by some means other than by war. He is old, and of course does not care to

take a chance, or to risk anything which might compromise the prosperity of the great work which he has performed. Perhaps this is natural, but I do not think that it is wise. All my historical studies have taught me that unless a nation goes ahead on the road of victories over its neighbours, it is apt to lose what it has already won. I do not intend Germany to lose anything. I mean to be one of its greatest Sovereigns and to lead it toward new prosperity and new conquests. It is strange, but I do not feel myself now in such close sympathy with Prince Bismarck as I have been hitherto. It seems to me that we have different points of view, and that he is growing old. Perhaps it is sorrow for my grandfather's death that has aged him; perhaps it is his health, which is no longer what it was. But I see a change in him which I do not like. I feel afraid that I shall be called upon sooner than I expected to rule alone, and to take the initiative myself of every grave resolution in regard to the fate of the Empire at whose head I stand.

*July 7th, 1888.*

Last night I had a long conversation with Colonel von Schlieffen of our General Staff. He



is the right hand of Count von Moltke, and I wanted him to explain to me the exact condition of our army to-day. What I have heard from him has been in a certain sense a great disappointment for me, as well as a great surprise. Of course our organisation is an admirable one, but it seems that our armaments are far from having attained the degree of perfection we require. Our artillery for instance is in no way superior to that of Russia or of France, especially of the latter country, and it may take years to bring it to such a point that we can feel absolutely certain of its superiority over every other nation in the world. Then our reserves are not strong enough or large enough by any means. Colonel von Schlieffen submitted to me several plans which had been worked out in our Staff, in case of a double attack taking place against us simultaneously from the West and from the East, and he told me that one of the best which had elicited expression of approval from Field Marshal von Moltke himself had been worked out by a young officer called Ludendorff. I must see this fellow and talk with him myself. It is a great thing to have won the regard of the greatest warrior of the century, especially if we take into account that Moltke hardly ever condescends to praise anybody or anything. The

result of my conversation has been to persuade me that Germany is far from being ready for a war, that it will take perhaps half a century before she can be completely sure of winning one, and that in the meanwhile it will be to the advantage of everybody that I should inaugurate a policy of peace at any price and try to convince the world that I mean to use my influence in the European concert in an entirely pacific sense. I begin to understand why it is that Prince Bismarck wishes me to remain upon good terms with the Tzar. But I do not approve of any eagerness being shown in that respect. I repeat it once more: I do not trust Russia, and I feel convinced that Alexander III. harbours anything but kindly feelings in regard to Germany. I am wondering whether after all it would not be possible to overcome French enmity in some way or other. Of course it is all nonsense talking of any restitution to the French Republic of Alsace, or even a part of Lorraine. Germany never gives back what she has taken. This is the great principle laid down by Frederick II. for the benefit of his successors and, thank God, they have always acted in accord with it. But perhaps a *modus vivendi* of some kind could be established, thanks to which France would reconcile herself to the inevitable, such for instance as our coöperat-

ing with her to extend her Colonial Empire. I must think about this matter, though I will not discuss it with Prince Bismarck, but, rather, talk it over with General von Waldersee, whose opinions I value exceedingly. There is one thing which rather troubles me. Colonel von Schlieffen told me that Count Moltke intended to ask me to allow him to resign his functions as Head of our Staff. This will be a great loss to us, because, in spite of his advanced years, the Marshal has such prestige everywhere that any measures I might have to propose in view of strengthening our army which would have his support could be carried through with small amount of opposition, and this would certainly not be the case if he had resigned his position. I also fear that his departure at present would be attributed by the public to some disagreement with me, and it might harm my own position. I shall of course not say anything about this for the present to any one, the more so that Colonel von Schlieffen asked me to treat his communication as absolutely confidential, which I shall also do. For the present my attention shall be given to visits to foreign courts, which in spite of the national mourning for my father I mean to pay as soon as the details concerning them have been arranged through our Foreign Office.

*November 15th, 1888.*

It is a long time since I have written anything in this diary. I have been very busy in the meanwhile, having travelled a good deal and visited Russia, Austria and Italy. I was rather apprehensive in regard to my reception in the latter country. King Humbert was a close friend of my father and I had reason to believe that he was not over kindly disposed in regard to my own person. But things went better than could have been expected, and we parted in a far more friendly manner than we had met. I admire exceedingly the Queen of Italy. She is a lovely and most accomplished woman, and her Saxon blood has attenuated the unpleasant side of the Italian character which exists in her husband. Whilst in Rome, I of course paid a visit to the Pope. To make my visit more impressive, I took with me one of my own state carriages and some horses, and I did not start from the Quirinal, but from the Prussian legation by the Holy See, where I had lunched before with Schloezer. This was of course meant as an act of deference to Leo XIII., but I am sorry to have to say that an unpleasant incident occurred in connection with this visit. Herbert Bismarck, who had accompanied me as Minister of Foreign Affairs, found that my interview with the Pope was lasting too

long, and, acting probably on the instructions which he had received from his father, he told my brother Henry (whom I had also brought to the Vatican and whom I meant to introduce to the Sovereign Pontiff myself later on) to force his way into the room where I was sitting with the Pope. Of course this was a piece of insolence, not so much in regard to Leo XIII. as in regard to myself, and I became very angry, though of course I had to restrain myself. The Pope also seemed offended, and afterwards a great deal was made out of this incident, which convinced me that the overbearing ways of the Bismarck family ought to be put an end to. I remember that my mother's Russian friend, about whom I have spoken already, told me one day that she felt convinced I would dismiss the Chancellor within two years of the day I should become Emperor, if he was still alive at the time. I felt even then that she was right, though of course I could not say so; but at present it seems to me as if her previsions were going to turn out true earlier even than she imagined.

The first visit which I paid after my accession was to the Tsar at Peterhof, and this was for once in accord with the desires of Prince Bismarck, who had been urging me all along to give him this proof of deference. But now that the

thing is over I wonder whether Alexander III. appreciated my motives. During the three days which I spent with him he looked terribly bored, and though he invited me to witness some military exercises, he did not give me any opportunity to see real manœuvres, which I would have liked to do. In Vienna things went much better. Every one there is eager for the continuance of cordial relations between us and Austria, and the old Emperor Francis Joseph, together with the Empress Elizabeth, showed themselves very kind and hospitable in regard to me. But I could not help feeling that the great times of the Hapsburgs had passed away and that henceforward Austria would have to accept in Germany that subordinate position which Prussia held for so long a time. In Vienna I met a lady whose beauty, I must confess, made a deep impression upon me. She was the young and lovely Countess von Goertz, a Brazilian by birth, and the daughter of that splendid Countess de Villeneuve, about whom all the men of her generation raved some thirty-five years ago. I do not think that she could have been more beautiful than her daughter, whom I wonder that I have never seen before. But it seems that her husband, Count von Goertz, had reasons to complain about the treatment which he had once received in Berlin at the hands of the

Empress Augusta, my grandmother, and that he had declared he would not return there. It was his wife who had incurred the displeasure of the Queen, who thought her frivolous and too independent in her opinions. I tried to atone for this rudeness, and cordially invited the Count and Countess to come to our capital for the season. I like her; she is entirely different from any other woman I have ever met, and is as intelligent as she is attractive. I feel sure that she will prove a charming addition to our Court circle.

*August 10th, 1889.*

I have at last paid a visit to my grandmother in England. I would have liked to do so long ago, but it seems that the Prince of Wales intrigued in every possible manner to persuade his mother to put it off. For one thing he explained to her that it would be preferable that my presence should not clash with that of my mother, who went to spend a few months in her native country and who was actually met by the Queen at Dover and escorted by the latter to Windsor, where she was asked to stay as long as she liked. This was a kind of manifestation directed against me which I could not but feel and which Prince von Bismarck took care to make me notice. I am

sorry he thought it worth while to do so, because I think it would have been more dignified on my part to have ignored it. If I had been allowed to do what I liked, I would nevertheless have gone to Windsor, feeling certain that I would have been able to change the feelings of my grandmother in regard to myself. But I am not always free to do all that I would wish, and, in this particular case, I had to accept the opinion of the Chancellor when the latter explained to me that he had been given to understand by our Ambassador in London that for the present my presence was not desired by Queen Victoria. I felt convinced that this was partly the work of my uncle, the Prince of Wales, and so I waited until Christmas, when I wrote to the Queen and told her that there was nothing in the world I wished more than to ask her help to clear the misunderstandings which had arisen between me and my mother, and that I hoped she would not refuse to do so. This letter produced the impression I had expected, and I was asked to come to Windsor during the summer. My visit proved entirely satisfactory, inasmuch as I think I convinced the Queen that I had been more sinned against than sinning, and obtained her promise to try and explain to the Dowager Empress that there was



nothing I wished for more than a reconciliation with her.

With regard to the Prince of Wales things were different. He showed himself exceedingly cold and ceremonious in his intercourse with me, and I followed his example, taking good care to make him feel that I considered him as quite beneath me, and that my position as German Emperor was so infinitely superior to the one which he occupied as heir apparent to the British Crown that I could afford to disdain any remarks which it might please him to make to me. He did not like this, of course, but he took the hint and never addressed me otherwise than as "Your Majesty" or "Sir," which I accepted, doing the same thing on my side in regard to him, and applying myself to prove to him that the former relations of uncle and nephew which had existed between us previous to my accession were at last and forever at an end between us.

*September 6th, 1889.*

My sister Sophie is to be married to the Crown Prince of Greece in October in Athens. Of course I shall be present at the wedding, which perhaps will afford me an opportunity to reestablish some cordial relations with my mother. I

mean to make this journey an event in my life and to extend it to Constantinople, where the Sultan will greet me with the more pleasure, I am sure, as it will be the first time a great European Sovereign has visited Turkey. When I mentioned to Prince Bismarck my intention to appear as a guest of the Commander of the Faithful in Constantinople he did not take at all kindly to the idea. He feared this might bring about complications with Russia. But at last he had to give in when I had explained to him what were the real reasons which induced me to take such a step. The truth of the matter is that I consider it essential to the interests of Germany to give her an outlet in the East, and if we could only secure our preponderance in the whole of the Balkan Peninsula, and further down in Asia Minor, not only would this be of incalculable advantage for our commercial interests, but it would fulfil the programme which Bismarck himself unfolded in bygone times to poor Alexander of Battenberg, when he told him that it might be useful to have in the Balkans a counter weight to Russian influence. If I flatter the Sultan—and of course he will feel flattered at finding himself the object of my attentions—he may be induced to grant German trade privileges in his states, which would be for the benefit not only of its expan-

sion, but also of ousting Russian, French and English merchants, who up to now have considered the East as their prey. Egypt, too, cannot remain forever an English possession, and it would be most dangerous for our future safety if we allowed Great Britain to rule over the whole of Africa, and control the dark Continent by means of a Cape to Cairo railway. Germany has also interests in Africa which must be protected, and Germany must be put outside the danger of English competition. The more I have been thinking about all these things the more convinced do I feel that our future lies in the East, and to the East accordingly I shall give all my attention for some time to come at least. From all that I have had the opportunity to see during my journeys abroad I find that there exists a determined resolution on the part of Great Britain, as well as of France, not to allow us to increase our Colonial Empire on the one side and to try to oust our trade from the Eastern markets on the other. This must change; and, though I know that it will be impossible to bring about this change quickly, yet I mean to do so—if not by persuasion, then by force.

*November 29th, 1889.*

I am back from my Eastern journey. Everything went off exceedingly well, and I could give to Prince Bismarck an interesting account of my conversations with the Sultan, as well as of the different impressions which I have brought back with me to Berlin. But though the Chancellor congratulated me on my apparent success, he urged me to proceed more slowly, and not to forget that it would create a deplorable impression not only abroad but also at home, if people thought that I was imbued with a spirit akin to that of Mussulman Sovereigns, and if I considered that the fact I was a King allowed me to do all that I liked. We had rather a heated discussion on this point, when I expressed my intention of applying the so-called War Fund, which is kept in Spandau, to the purchase of new armaments, taking this action without the knowledge or the sanction of Parliament. The Prince said that such a resolution, if I executed it, might land me into serious difficulties in case a war broke out and it should be discovered that this fund had been spent without the nation being aware of it. My reply was that it would never be discovered under circumstances that might evoke this indignation which he seemed to fear. I shall never go to war, or allow Germany to go

to war, until I have put our army on such a footing of perfection that success will be a mathematical certainty. And in presence of new victories, which would mean new indemnities, the country would never pay any attention to the non-existence of the war fund, but on the contrary would be grateful to me for having used it to increase the power of our army. One of the reasons also which makes me desire to perfect our armaments without any one being the wiser for it is my conviction that if ever we are compelled to go to war it will be a struggle of such magnitude that unless we are thoroughly prepared to meet it we shall be courting a moral disaster far greater than any material one we might suffer. Germany now cannot afford to be beaten by any one, and I would be a fool if I did not see that there are many people waiting for the day when they can beat her. Her best security is to let the world think that she is quite content with what she has and that she does not dream of further conquests, and in the meanwhile to consolidate the perfection of her armaments and to add to the number of her army in a surreptitious manner which will escape the notice of those who watch us everywhere, as well as that of the press. But, strange to say, Prince Bismarck seemed to be of quite a different opinion from me, and he irritated me by

the tone of authority which he took in regard to me, a tone which seemed to imply that I was a child who did not understand what I was talking about.

I begin to think that it will be very difficult for me to get on with Prince Bismarck "*à la longue*," and I said something of the kind to the Grand Duke of Baden. The latter has never cared for our great man, but he advised me nevertheless to be very careful not to wound the feelings of the German nation, who regard the Prince as a national hero and the only remaining survivor of very great times. This is very well in its way, but I do not see why I need a mentor at my heels constantly, and I should prefer if the Prince showed himself more deferential in regard to my person than is the case. Lately he has assumed a tone of arrogance when talking with me which is exceedingly disagreeable and not at all respectful. After all, I am the Emperor and he ought not to forget it, and it is not he who has made me an Emperor either. I have inherited the dignity from God, our German God, who surely means me to add another glorious page to those upon which the brave deeds of my ancestors are recorded.

What puzzles me also in the conduct of Prince Bismarck is his determination to throw me, or

Germany—which after all is the same thing—into the arms of Russia. He seems to have entirely lost his former confidence in Austria, and more than once lately he has told me that Austria, in case of a war, would only be a hindrance in our path. He would dearly like to see us engaged in another conflict with France, in which we could secure to ourselves, if not the help, at least the neutrality of Russia. I think this point of view absolutely false. We ought to crush Russia before we attack any other nation, because so long as Russia remains unhurt and stands on the summit upon which she finds herself to-day others will look up to her, and France, especially, will be seeking her alliance and offer to buy it, no matter at what price. Once Russia is out of the way then it will be an easy matter either to get rid of France or else to try to win her over to our side by some means or other, even if it is necessary by the granting of autonomy to Alsace-Lorraine. If France is with us, then it will be an easy matter to shake the great English colossus and to isolate it even more than it has ever desired. I feel convinced that, commercially speaking, England is the only enemy we have to dread, and when Queen Victoria will have closed her eyes it is not outside the limit of probabilities that my revered uncle of Wales will try to trans-

form his kingdom into an aggressive power, ready to seek alliances and, if necessary, to assert itself in case of any great European conflict. But Prince Bismarck will not look so far forward. It is his conviction that Russia must be propitiated by all means. I do not share it, and I will not accept the suggestions which he makes in that direction.

Another point in which the Chancellor continually tries to thwart me is in regard to social questions in our own country. He thinks that by touching upon economical subjects before the next elections I may exercise a nefarious influence on their results. I do not think so, and I do not mean to yield to him on this point either.

*February 10th, 1890.*

We are now in open conflict with Prince Bismarck. I published, without referring the matter to him at all, a circular calling together an international conference of representatives of the working classes, to discuss different questions concerning their position in regard to capitalism. This has made the Prince furious, as I expected it would, but then why did he not yield to me? Why did he not remember that I am the King, and that I can assume the full responsibility for



any actions it may please me to commit? I tried to explain to the Prince my opinion in as mild terms as possible, but he absolutely refused to listen to me, and in his turn reminded me that there existed a Royal Order issued by Frederick William IV. on April 8th, 1852, which gave to the President of the Council of Ministers the sole responsibility of every official measure and forbade any step being taken in matters of government that had not been previously submitted to him for approval. This of course could not be tolerated, so I instantly told the Prince that I should issue a decree abolishing this statute. To tell the truth, I was glad that Bismarck furnished me with such a plausible pretext for his dismissal, upon which I had definitely made up my mind; because I would not have cared for the public to guess that the real reason for our quarrel consists in our difference of opinion in regard to foreign affairs. And in order to burn my bridges behind me I decided to summon to Berlin the Generals in command of the different army corps stationed in the provinces, and I told them quite confidently that Russia wished to occupy Bulgaria and had asked for Germany's neutrality in case she sent troops to Varna. Bismarck was quite ready to comply with this demand of the Tsar, but I could not do so, because I had prom-

ised to be a true ally to the Emperor of Austria and I was in honour bound to stand by him. The occupation of Bulgaria by Russian troops would have meant an Austro-Russian war, and I would not abandon Austria in this crisis. I solemnly declared to the Generals that I would throw in my fate and that of Germany with Austria, even if this involved the risk of becoming entangled in war with Russia and with France at the same time. My words were received with most enthusiastic cheers, and of course Bismarck heard all about what I had said; but whether he thought the matter beneath his notice or whether he did not wish to precipitate a conflict, which he most probably felt was impending, he did not make any sign of having been informed of the substance of my address.

*March 15th, 1890.*

Events have gone by quickly. The elections were not favourable to the Government, just as the Chancellor had predicted. But I do not care. I mean to govern with or without the help of Parliament, and I do not trouble much as to the opinions of the latter. What affected me much more was to hear that Bismarck had thought it necessary to summon to his house for a confer-

ence Windhorst, the chief of the Catholic party, and one of the most bitter opponents of my policy. This was more than could be borne. I therefore sent Lucanus, the head of my private chancery, to the Chancellor, to demand from the latter an explanation of this action. What added to my irritation was that a private letter which I received to-day from St. Petersburg informed me that the Prince had written to the Tsar to tell him that against his advice I was about to inaugurate an anti-Russian policy. Hearing from Lucanus that Bismarck had simply replied to my communication that he would allow no one, not even the Sovereign, to say whom he was or was not to receive in his house, I made up my mind to go myself and seek the Minister from whom I was quite determined to separate myself then and there. I had to wait a long time before I could see him, as he was still in bed when I reached his residence, and this did not tend to soothe my feelings. So that when at last Bismarck appeared I began the conversation by asking him what his negotiations with Windhorst had meant. To my surprise the Prince simply said that he had not negotiated with him, only received him privately. "In that case," I said, "I must request you to keep me informed when

you think it necessary to confer with Parliamentary leaders."

Bismarck's face changed considerably, and one could see the surprise that overpowered him when he found himself called to account for anything that he had done. But he kept his temper, rather to my surprise and disappointment, as I would have liked him to make a scene and thus furnish me with the pretext I was seeking to ask him for his resignation, and he simply said: "I cannot admit any interference concerning my relations with any one, and the commands of my Sovereign do not concern the Princess Bismarck, who alone has the right to say whom she will or will not receive in her drawing-room. It is only in compliance with a promise which the Emperor William I. asked me to give to him upon his death-bed that I have consented to remain in the service of his grandson, and if I have ceased to please Your Majesty I am quite ready to retire."

"I accept your resignation," I exclaimed, and left the house. The Prince did not even accompany me to the door, as etiquette required him to do. And I returned to the Palace with the feeling that at last I had gotten rid of the tutor who wished to rule me with the same iron hand he had used in ruling Prussia and, later on, Germany. I must confess that the scene had moved me deep-

ly. After all, Bismarck is the greatest figure in our country, and, in a certain sense, in Europe, and I am sure that many people will call me ungrateful for my treatment of him. But it would have been impossible for two characters like ours to work for a long time in common. With all his unscrupulousness Bismarck still has certain prejudices which would have hampered me, which already have hampered me, in the course which I mean to pursue. He will also not admit that the conquests to which our country has the right to aspire, and which are indispensable to its future greatness, are far from being completed. He believes in the efficaciousness of our army to such an extent that he does not think it needs anything more than to continue to be administered in the same way it has been for the last twenty years. I think that he is wrong in this appreciation. Our army must be made larger, but we must not allow our neighbours to guess that we are adding to its effectiveness. Our armaments also ought to be perfected, our artillery modified, and our ammunition provisions considerably increased. This must be done as secretly as possible, and any expenses which we make in that direction must not be submitted to the budget commission of the Reichstag. It was on account of this that I suggested using the war fund which

is kept in Spandau—a proposition that aroused the most bitter opposition on the part of the Prince. Well, now all this is a question of the past. He is gone, he is no longer here to thwart me, to make me feel at every step I take that it is he who is the master and that I am but a figure-head in the show. I only hope that he will really go. During my grandfather's reign he spoke so often of retiring and it never came to anything at all. This time, however, he must be made to stick to his word, and, by all that is holy, I shall compel him to do so.

*March 30th, 1890.*

At last all is over and he is gone. I almost thought for one moment that I would have to force matters and to order him to leave the capital, so long did he take before he could make up his mind to accept the inevitable. I spent some anxious days, and they were not lightened by the different reports which came to me from every side, when I was informed that the nation viewed the retirement of its hero with anything but approving eyes. What does this matter? The day will come when I shall also be the idol of my subjects, and when they will fully understand my reasons for getting rid of a man who, in

spite of his genius, was standing between me and the realisation of the programme I have set myself to fulfil. I must say that I believed Bismarck had more dignity in his character than he showed during the last fortnight. If I had been in his place I would have flung my resignation in the face of those who asked me for it and shaken the dust of Berlin off my feet the same day. The Prince did nothing of the kind, and at last I had to send Hahnke to him to tell him that I was expecting his resignation and that I felt surprised not to have received it. This was on the 17th of March, but it lasted two days longer until the last document was put into my hands. The Prince did not come to say good-bye to me. I had conferred the Dukedom of Lauenburg upon him, but he is said to have remarked that it was with the intention of preventing him from calling himself further by the name which he had made so great, that of Bismarck. In this he wronged me, because such a thought had not crossed my mind. We must, however, let this pass, together with so many other things, about which I shall try not to think any more. The departure of the Prince was quite a solemn affair, and it seems that a large crowd had gathered at the railway station to bid him good-bye. His last words were, "The Emperor shall see me again." I wonder

what he meant by that. Before leaving Berlin, he had been to take leave of my mother, who throughout this incident has, it seems, been entirely on the side of the dismissed minister. It is always so with her. She does not say a word, and yet contrives to let me see that she disapproves of all that I do. That same day Bismarck had driven to Charlottenburg, where he left a bunch of roses on the grave of my grandfather. I heard that people flocked that same evening and this morning to look upon these flowers, and so I gave orders to remove them. This also appears to have irritated my mother, who even mentioned the matter to my wife, remarking that it was a very mean thing to do. What can she understand of the motives which guide me? However, all this is *neben sache*. The principal thing is that Bismarck is gone. I have appointed General von Caprivi as Chancellor. He is a good soldier, and he will not thwart me in the plans which I have for the reorganisation of the army. For the present I require nothing more.

*July 5th, 1890.*

I have discovered that in regard to foreign politics the retirement of Prince Bismarck has not left the German Empire upon the best of



terms with its neighbours, nor even with any definite policy. Our treaty with Austria appears to me to be the only sound thing upon which I can rely for the moment. Russia remains an enigma to me; but the more I look into matters the more persuaded do I become that she must be thrust back into Asia, and that we ought to gain possession of all her outlets on the Baltic Sea. It is an essential thing for our trade. Another thing which I should like to establish would be a kind of entente cordiale between us and England, so as not to throw the latter power into the arms of France. I do not fear any such contingency during the life of Queen Victoria; but she is so old that it is quite excusable to make plans for the time when she will be no longer here. The Prince of Wales, I feel convinced, will remain a thorn in my side and in that of Germany. He has always looked upon me with suspicious eyes, and, besides, he thinks himself also a great diplomat and politician, and he will try to make up for lost time and reveal himself as a Monarch who means to govern by himself and not to submit to his ministers. He is right in this, but how does it agree with those principles of the irresponsibility of the Sovereign which is one of the bases of the English constitution?

I must now apply myself to make hay while the sun shines, and so long as the Queen is alive I shall try to cultivate pleasant relations with England. With this object in view, I visited my grandmother again, and I was very glad to find that some of the prejudices which undoubtedly had existed against me among her subjects had to a certain extent disappeared. Whilst I was entertained at the Mansion House there was not a single discordant note in the whole proceedings, and the population of London gave me a really warm welcome. Lord Salisbury also received me at Hatfield with great cordiality, and we had several long conversations together, during which I tried to establish the basis for future good-fellowship and a common action of our two countries in certain contingencies; such, for instance, as the possibility of European peace being threatened, which we decided we should do our utmost to prevent. I hope that I have impressed the English Prime Minister with my sincere love for peace. I should indeed feel sorry to see the latter endangered at the present moment, before Germany is ready to snatch the world-wide Empire which I mean to obtain for her in the future. Lord Salisbury acknowledged that the retreat of Prince Bismarck had not been a misfortune, and politely added that he could understand I had

found it sometimes difficult to get on with him. I was very careful not to touch upon the subject of my intention to strengthen my navy and to try and make out of Germany a sea power as strong as she is a territorial one. This might have alarmed him, and it is yet too early to tackle that matter, which cannot be made public for some time to come. But what I tried to impress upon Lord Salisbury was my conviction of the deep responsibilities which rested upon me as German Emperor, and of the world-mission of Germany, that must never weary in her work of civilisation, and whose spirit, like the spirit of Imperial Rome, must expand and impose itself everywhere. The English Prime Minister, however, did not seem quite to agree with me in this ambition, because he remarked that in the times we were living one could not expect the spirit of one nation to dominate everything, but that each country had its own civilisation, out of which the general one which governed the whole world was made. This may be so now, but it must not be the case in the future, which belongs to Germany alone.

*December 5th, 1895.*

In spite of my efforts to establish intimate relations between my government and that of Queen Victoria I have not been able to do it to the extent I consider desirable. The English seem to have guessed my intention of carrying the German flag overseas. They will not understand that other nations have as much right as the English to possess a fleet and to aspire to the control of the seas. It has always been my intention to build up a strong navy, and it was not without considerable forethought that I disclosed my aims at the beginning of this year at the evening reception which I gave to the members of the Reichstag. I told them that our future lay on the water and that I was going to put myself at the head of the movement to make Germany a sea power. It was also after great hesitation but with a firm determination not to waver from the task I had decided to impose upon myself and upon the whole German people that I telegraphed to my brother Henry, saying I would not rest "until I had brought my navy to the same height at which my army stands." This is but a natural longing, after all, but I fear that the English people who have controlled the sea for so long a time will see in it aggressive designs directed against themselves. For the moment they are

quite mistaken, because I firmly believe to-day that every German warship launched is one more guarantee for peace on earth. War will become an impossibility once the world becomes convinced that there does not exist one nation capable of coping with the military and naval might of Germany—at least an impossibility so long as we do not go to war. And why should we do so if we are allowed to have it our own way, to annex new colonies, and to carry on our trade unchallenged? I have always held to the opinion once expressed by Frederick the Great that the aim of the Hohenzollerns ought to be a “world-wide dominion founded upon conquests not gained by the sword, but by the mutual confidence of nations that press towards the same goal.” I also think that in view of the growing naval power of Japan, England should welcome the existence of a German fleet, and not dread it. Unfortunately, this is far from being the case, and the English press especially tries to excite among the English people a profound distrust of my policy and of my country. A perfectly innocent telegram which I sent to President Krüger after the infamous attempt that had been made against the independence of the Transvaal by that filibuster Jameson was interpreted by public opinion in Great Britain in quite a different sense

from what I had meant it to be. This telegram was nothing but an impulse of warm sympathy with a weak state unjustly attacked, and if the English people had been sensible they would have accepted it as such and not tried to find in it a condemnation of English politics with which I have nothing to do. I begin to feel afraid that I shall not be able to preserve friendly relations with England after Queen Victoria has passed away. Her ambitious son will make it his business not only to thwart me, but also to make it very difficult for me to restrain my own subjects from indulging in demonstrations of distrust in regard to Great Britain. As it is, they do not like to hear that for every new battleship we are building she starts to construct three. Does this not clearly prove that she means one day or other to go to war with us, and that she tries in the meanwhile to maintain her naval superiority over our fleet? This is bound to give rise to suspicions in Germany as to the ultimate designs of Great Britain; but on the other hand it encourages me to go on with the naval programme that has been submitted to me, and which I intend to carry through, no matter what opposition I may meet with on my way, either at home or abroad.

*December 4th, 1898.*

Many things have happened during these three years, but I think that I can consider the present one as very important in my life. I have been able to accomplish what had been one of my dearest wishes—to go to Palestine to pray before the grave of the Redeemer. People who have criticised my conduct on this occasion prove that they know me and my character very little. They do not realise that the whole of human life “hinges simply and solely on our attitude towards our Lord and Saviour.” This applies to Sovereigns as well as to common mortals, and indeed Sovereigns more than other people ought to take this precept to heart. I have always wished to be considered as a Christian Monarch, and I mean to live and die as one. But I feel that I have momentous years to live through before I have done with my allotted task, and I want to gather strength to go on with my self-imposed mission and to transform the whole of the world with the help of the real German Kultur which alone can establish perpetual peace. It was with the feelings of the Crusaders of old that I started for the Holy Land, and, like them, I was able to redeem some portion of that soil which in past ages absorbed their blood when I obtained from the Sultan the section of the plot of ground called

“The Dormition de la Vierge” and to present it to my Catholic subjects as a gift. On the last night of my stay in Jerusalem I had a religious service solemnised on the summit of the Mount of Olives, to which only my suite and that of the Empress were allowed to be present. It was a moment which I shall never forget. There I was, the most mighty Monarch of the earth, standing face to face with the remembrances inseparable from this sacred spot and seeking in them and in the example of Christ help and strength for the future. I felt then that really God was on my side, on the German side, and that He would protect me and my country always. I recommended that country to Him, and I knew that He accepted it, that He would stand by us Germans in the hour of need, and that God was really our German God, to Whom all our homage is due in return for all the blessings which we expect that He will shower upon us.

*February 6th, 1901.*

One of the greatest Sovereigns Europe has known, my beloved grandmother, Queen Victoria, has passed away. I was present at her death-bed, and I do not think that any one of her children has mourned for her with more sincerity



than I have done. She was always so kind to me, and I felt that so long as she was there nothing could disturb the happy relations existing between her government and mine; that she would never consent to bring matters to such a crisis that a war might arise between Great Britain and Germany. I felt that under her protection I could carry out my naval programme unmolested and that she would never see in it a menace to the peace of the world. With her enterprising son things, I fear, will be very different. He will be seeking for causes of conflict where none exist. I feel altogether unnerved when I think about the future and all that it may hold in store for me and for my people. Already, a few years ago, I had a great shock when Alexander III. passed away; but then it was rather a shock of relief. I hated that Tsar, so full of arrogance, who thought that there was nothing in the whole world as great as the Russian Empire, and who, besides, inaugurated this policy of toadying to France, out of which may result the greatest military conflict the world has ever known. Even if others do not see it, I cannot close my eyes to the fact that the Franco-Russian alliance, which unfortunately is to-day an accomplished fact, means sooner or later a European war. The French will never rest until they have

made at least a try to win back Alsace and Lorraine. As if we Germans could ever think of returning these provinces, the possession of which we bought with so much blood! I have tried to carry on a policy of peace; I have tried to persuade the world that I am not at all the warlike man I have been represented by my enemies. And I have done this at the cost of many personal sacrifices of pride and of vanity, in order to be able to prepare our army for the struggle which I know is inevitable. Prince Bismarck, who also foresaw this possibility of another war between us and France, wanted to win Russia to our side. I have never been of his opinion. First, Russia lies on my programme of conquest. Her Baltic provinces are German; they must return to their mother country. Russia is an uncivilised, Asiatic nation that ought to be hurled back towards Asia, where alone she can do some good. She is not fit to govern any European territory, if only on account of the deep corruption which prevails in her administrative circles. I do not think that as an ally she would be worth much to us. But under the late Tsar, she was emerging from her state of Oriental effeminacy and she was organising herself more or less. He was a man with an iron will, and he was the only really honest man in the whole of his vast Empire. The mere

existence of such a character was a source of danger to Germany, as well as to German ambitions in the way of expansion. The resources of Russia, when controlled by a monarch of the mental calibre of Alexander III., and combined with French activity, might have given us a lot of trouble. This knowledge made me welcome the death of the Tsar as an event most favourable to us. His successor is such a nonentity that it will always be easy to bring him over to us, if we think it of advantage to our interests. Besides, his wife, Alix of Hesse, is entirely German, and will see that our interests do not suffer from French intrigues. I could therefore afford to be happy on that November day which saw the mighty autocrat of all the Russias expire in his Crimean castle. But in the case of my Grandmother Victoria it is very different. I loved her; and, besides, she was a great Queen, owing probably to the German blood which ran in her veins. Her decease is a matter of world-wide interest, not merely an historical incident.

I was discussing this question the other day with von Bülow, whom I begin to like more and more since he has become Chancellor. I did not think I would at first, though I found that he was doing very well as Foreign Secretary. But then this came perhaps from my distaste for the

office of German Chancellor in general, the holder of which is bound to come sometimes into conflict with the Sovereign. I felt it even with Caprivi, though the latter did very well in the beginning. I felt it also with Hohenlohe, but then this proceeded perhaps from other causes. The Prince, owing to his position and to his relationship with my wife, was placed on a pedestal whence it was impossible to oust him, and he had to a certain extent the right to make remarks to me another man would not have presumed to do. I respected him also, and I must say that I have at times found that he could give me some very good advice. And when he noticed that his admonitions were no longer welcome he retired, a fact which I appreciated perhaps more than he himself suspected. Hohenlohe would never have identified himself with the policy of preparing for war whilst continually protesting of our love for peace, but this preparation I mean to make after the death of Queen Victoria has placed us, my Uncle Edward VII. and myself, in a position of semi-equality and complete antagonism. In that respect I find that Bülow shares my opinion that the new King will endeavour to create enemies for us, not so much because he detests Germany as because he loathes me personally.

*August 25th, 1901.*

This has been a sad month for me, just as this year will remain a memorable one for me. My mother, the widowed Empress Frederick, died at her Castle of Cronberg on the 5th of August. She had been given over by the doctors for a year past, and the only wonder is that she could last so long in spite of the terrible sufferings which she endured. Lately our relations, which had been so unhappy for many years, had improved, and I think that we both came to understand each other at last. Certainly I am far more grieved at her death than I could have thought possible, and I have often, since she passed away, questioned myself as to whether I was not, after all, hard and unfeeling in my conduct to her. Now that I have children of my own growing up I can see things in a different light, and I bitterly reproach myself for many, many things I would like to see undone at present.

I feel that my mother's death has changed something in my life and given another turn to my thoughts, and I would like to be able to atone for some of the grief which I must have caused her and my father in the years gone by. She happily never guessed how much I value this principle of militarism against which she fought with such energy, and I am glad that this was so.

It would only have added to her many sorrows to think that I was compelled to prepare for what she would have recoiled from with horror. Poor mother! She was never appreciated by her children; I begin to understand it. And even when my grandfather passed away I do not think that I experienced such emotion and such bitter grief as on that day when I knelt beside her coffin in the little church of Cronberg after the funeral service, which was solemnised there previous to the removal of her remains to Potsdam. I would have given much to be able to recall her to life, if even for a few minutes, just long enough for me to tell her all that I had in my heart of love and regret for her.

*March 4th, 1902.*

I do not know what is the matter with me. For the first time in my life I find myself thinking constantly about a woman. It is the Countess Sophy von Goertz, whom I met in Vienna some years ago. I had invited her then, together with her husband, to come to Berlin, which they had not visited since the beginning of their married life on account of some discourtesy shown them by my grandmother, the Empress Augusta, and I told them that they ought to forget it and to

resume at my Court the position to which their high birth and rank entitled them. For some years they did not respond to my invitation, and then this winter they appeared. The Countess was presented to the Empress, who, however, did not take to her kindly, I do not know why. I was attracted to her from the first moment I set my eyes upon her in Vienna, and, now that I know her better, the charm persists. I am wondering whether it is possible that I find myself really in love and not merely attracted by a pretty face. Sophy Goertz is indeed something more than pretty; she is a character such as one rarely meets nowadays: pure and proud, a clever woman, with an unusually keen intelligence and quick comprehension. We soon became friends, and I came, I really do not know how, to confide in her many things which I had kept locked up in my own heart without even daring to impart them to any one else. I think she likes me, too, because she enters into my interests with such zeal, and understands, better than anybody with whom I have ever discussed them, my aims in politics and my plans for the future greatness of my beloved Germany. I somehow catch myself continually thinking about Sophy, and when she is not near I feel quite unhappy. I wonder whether this means that I am really in love, and, if such is the case, what

must I do? It is against my principles to have a *maitresse en titre*, even if she consented to become such. I set myself, among other rules when I ascended the throne, never to give rise to any scandal in regard to my private life. And, besides, I think that I am dealing with an honest woman. She wants nothing from me; her position is such that she can defy calumny, so why can we not go on being friends and let the world talk if it likes? I have always wanted a real friend, with whom I could show myself in my true colours, before whom I need not dissimulate or feign feelings that I have not. I mean to talk to Sophy seriously when I go to see her at the Castle of Schlitz where her husband has invited me to shoot woodcocks next month. The present condition of things is quite intolerable to me, and I would like to have matters arranged in some way. Either I must throw off this fancy and think no more about it or else we must come to an understanding and she must consent to become "*une amie de Roi*," which I have always longed for and have never been able to win.

*April 6th, 1902.*

I have spoken with Sophy. To my surprise I found myself very nearly making a fool of my-



self for a pair of pretty eyes. But, oh, how lovely they are! I must, however, relate the whole incident as it took place. I arrived in Schlitz for a week's visit, and was surprised to find the hostess looking very ill indeed—so ill that I began to get worried. But to all my questions she merely replied that she was only tired and would soon be all right again. One afternoon, however, I asked myself to tea in her boudoir, and then began talking with her and at last made her an avowal of my feelings for her. Great was my surprise to see her burst into tears and to hear that she too had discovered that she loved me and that this had broken her heart and shattered her health. I could not help myself, I took her in my arms and even kissed her passionately. But she drew herself away, and then spoke words which have remained imprinted in letters of fire in my heart and brain.

"Sire," she said, "I begin to know you well, and I understand that any woman would feel proud at having won your affections and your confidence. But it is precisely because I have done so that I feel so unhappy. You have disclosed to me your intentions and your views in regard to the future. Will you forgive me if I tell you that those confidences of yours have simply broken my heart? You know that I am

half a Frenchwoman; that I was born and bred in Paris, and that I have seen something of the horrors of the War of 1870. I was a child then, but I still remember that terrible time, and I have realised and seen what war means. Now you, according to your own words, are preparing yourself and your army for another war, which very probably you will force on the world (if it is not first declared by others to you), when you think that you are ready to meet it and to win it perhaps. How can I think about such things without terror, how can I love a man who is planning to bring such misery upon mankind? I had also made an ideal out of you; I had imagined you would always remain the peace-loving Sovereign that some people imagine you to be, and as such I would have given to you my love, my heart, my person, and everything that I possessed. But after what you have told me my thoughts have changed, and I wonder, I wonder, whether I most hate or love you."

I was so amazed that I could say nothing. But I took Sophy's hands in mine and merely said:

"I love you so that I feel I could do anything you asked of me to-day."

She started; and then, in an enquiring, tender tone, such as I had never heard before, replied:

"Will you give up your plans of world conquest? Oh, if you do, all I have is yours and my love besides!"

And then I recovered my scared wits. What was I doing, where was this woman leading me? Who was she—a French spy, or merely an exalted creature who really believed in idealism and eternal charity and love of mankind such as is preached in goody-goody books and in novels? What did she want from me—*me*, the German Emperor, who ought to be thinking of my country and not of a woman's pretty face? I gathered up my courage, which, I will confess, was beginning to fail me, and tried to reason with her, to tell her that she must not think about contingencies that perhaps would never arise, and that in the meanwhile we ought to make the best of it, and to take the good things which life was offering us. She would not listen to me, however, and at last we parted coolly and I left Schlitz the next morning. But since I have been back all my thoughts have been with Sophy, and I have been wondering what could have put such ideas into her head. They have proved to me one thing, however, and that is that I was terribly wrong to take a woman for a confidante in regard to my ambitious plans. They have shown me that a Sovereign ought to remain isolated and

not imagine that he can find sympathy among his subjects, who, having been brought up under other influences than those which have presided over his education, cannot enter into his views or judge of his motives. Sophy Goertz is certainly the cleverest and most sympathetic creature I have had the fortune to know, and her beauty has appealed to me also in quite an extraordinary manner. But she is a woman, after all, and to all such my heart ought to remain closed.

*November 3d, 1902.*

The Countess Goertz died in a private hospital at Charlottenburg last night. She went there with her husband about one month ago to consult a surgeon, as her health, it seems, had been failing ever since last April when I visited her and the Count at Schlitz. It was found that an operation was necessary, and she was removed from the Palace Hotel to a sanatorium, but did not live to have the operation performed. Her strength failed so rapidly that the doctors thought they had better wait and not make her suffer uselessly. The Empress went to see her when her condition had been pronounced hopeless, or almost so, and, though she had never liked her, she came back in tears and told me that she had nearly broken

down at seeing the change which a few months had wrought in the appearance of the once beautiful woman who had kept the glances of every single person riveted upon her when she entered a room. The Countess was quite aware that she was dying, and was showing herself wonderfully resigned to her fate. "Give my respects to the Emperor," she said, and my wife was so touched that she advised me to go and see the Countess before it was too late. Sometimes Augusta has a marvellous comprehension of the feelings of others, and I shall always remain grateful to her for her attitude on the present occasion. I therefore acted on her advice and went to Charlottenburg, where I was admitted into the room full of flowers where the once lovely Sophy Goertz lay on a couch in a dressing-gown all lace and ribbons, the pink shade of which accentuated the haggardness of her face, in which her eyes seemed the only living feature. I was so moved that I could hardly restrain my tears as I went up to her and kissed her hands. She seemed to be quite calm, and merely said :

"I am glad to have seen you before the end. I wished to ask you not to think otherwise than with kindness of me. I have loved you so truly and so sincerely !"

"I have also loved you," I replied.

"Yes, but you would not sacrifice any of your plans and designs for my sake," she murmured.

"Sophy, I could not do it," I answered.

The dying woman closed her eyes, and then took my hand in hers.

"Good-bye," she said softly; "good-bye forever."

"Good-bye," I repeated, and then kissed her hands once more, knowing but too well I would never do so again in this world.

She died at midnight, quite peacefully, I was told. I sent roses to be put on her coffin, and I mean to go to Schlitz for the funeral. I feel as if something has snapped within me, as if I have lost the dearest treasure I ever possessed. And yet amidst my sorrow I feel proud that I have not sacrificed for a woman's love anything I owe to my Fatherland, that I have remained a true German, thinking only of the future greatness of Germany, even in an hour of crisis such as few men, so at least I think, have had to undergo. If ever I loved anybody, it was Sophy Goertz, but when she asked me to give up for her sake all the ambitions I had been imprudent enough to confide to her I am glad that I did not hesitate and that I rather sacrificed her, and my love for her, than what I owed to my country and to my people. Germany must become the world-

wide power it is destined to be, and it must become such during my reign, if only as a compensation for all that I have sacrificed for its sake and for that of its greatness and welfare.

*September 4th, 1904.*

I have had an opportunity to talk with prominent military men concerning the condition of our army. The recent reverses which Russia has suffered in Manchuria have convinced me (and I am glad to say that my military advisers in our General Staff share this opinion) that she is not a power to be dreaded by us. It will take years for her to recover from her disasters, and the loss of prestige which has been the consequence. This war in which my Cousin Nicholas has plunged headforemost has been the most lucky thing that could have happened for Germany. Without it we might have nourished illusions as to the worth (not of the Russian army; the men are all right as soldiers go) but as to the organisation which presides at their War Office, and as to the lamentable strategic weakness of their high command. We know now what we have to expect if we ever find ourselves at war with our Muscovite neighbours. Of course they will try (I use purposely the word "try")—they will *try* to remedy the defects which have come to the surface in

such a flagrant manner; but all their efforts will prove unavailing, and the corruption which presides at every Russian enterprise will not be extirpated so soon. Up to now the world had illusions in regard to the military might and resources of Russia. An experienced man must now see the truth and recognise all the weak sides of that country and the complete inaptitude of the Russian government. All the experts in Russian affairs with whom I have had the opportunity to speak, and all the military men whom I have consulted on the subject, agree in the belief that for the next fifteen years, if not more, Russia will not be able to put into the field any army worthy of that name, in the matter of armaments at least, unless she makes up her mind to give up her inner administration and the conduct of the War Office to her "splendid" allies—the French. This she is not likely to do, in spite of all her French sympathies. We can, besides, put some obstacles in the way of this plan by offering to provide her, at a cheaper cost, with guns, ammunition, rifles, and other war implements. In Russia this way of obtaining what one wants is always successful, because cheaper goods mean larger commissions for those entrusted with the buying of them. We shall make it our business to see to that matter. I wish that we could strike



at present the great blow which we are bound to deliver sooner or later before Germany establishes her supremacy all over the world. Unfortunately we also are not ready for this. Our armaments still require to be perfected by a good deal, and especially our artillery must be provided with quite different guns from those which have been in use up to now. In that respect I have not been left in any doubt, either by the administrators and managers of the Krupp works, or by our Staff that has never wavered in its opinion, that we could not go to war unless we could find means of terrorising our enemies to such an extent, thanks to the scientific implements which we would bring to bear in the conduct of a campaign, that they would be almost compelled to beg for peace from their dread of the ruin which we could compass. But before we come to this moment we may have a different crisis to weather, not only abroad but also at home, where difficulties seem to grow with each day that passes. There are people who urge me to profit from the state of weakness in which Russia finds herself to-day, and of the revolution which is looming on the horizon, in order to attack her; but this would not at all agree with my future intentions. A revolution in St. Petersburg can only weaken the might of the Tsar, and

everything which does that is an advantage for Germany. As for going to the help of my Cousin Nicholas, which other persons pretend would be my duty, I do not think about it at all. I do not care for an alliance with Russia. Let her do what she likes; let her lend herself to the ambitious plans of my good Uncle Edward VII. It is her own lookout; mine is a different one altogether. I shall watch for the development of events, and that is all. The future will bury its own dead, and shape itself according to the designs of Providence and those of our German God who has all along watched over us. I can never forget that we have "a Divine Ally" whose protection so far has never failed us. I have said it already, and I shall repeat it whenever I find a suitable opportunity. I consider myself "as the instrument of the Lord, and without heeding the views and the opinions of the day I go my way."

*June 7th, 1905.*

My son, the Crown Prince, was married yesterday to the Duchess Cecile of Mecklenburg. I thought fit to commemorate the occasion by raising Count von Bülow to the rank of Prince. I would have done it anyhow, because after the

great triumph which he obtained in bringing about the retreat of Delcassé I owed him a reward. But it might have been inconvenient from the point of view of our international relations to bestow the title on him at present if my son's wedding had not furnished me with the pretext I required. Von Bülow himself knows perfectly well to what he owes the new distinction with which he has been honoured. This fall of Delcassé had been wished for by me for ever so long. I hate this man, who alone perhaps in all Europe has discovered what I have tried to hide from the prying eyes of the world—our new military preparations. We found out that he had been made aware of their extent (thanks to a letter which our Intelligence Service succeeded in getting hold of), and ever since that time I have been trying to get rid of him. His fall, besides, constituted a triumph for us, as well as humiliation for France, which ought to have been most agreeable to the German people. With Delcassé in power, any amount of premature complications might have interfered with our plans and caused us to show our cards sooner than would have been safe. I think that by this time I have convinced most of the world of my peace-loving intentions, and I must continue to do so for a while. When I ascended the throne every one

predicted that I would hasten to proclaim war within twelve months. At present the belief is that I have been misjudged and that the very fact of my existence is a safeguard to peace. So it must remain until the time when I find it convenient to declare war.

*October 31st, 1907.*

I find myself at variance with von Bülow. The trouble arose out of the interview which I awarded to the correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, in which I exposed my attitude in regard to international politics. I wanted through this communication to reassure the English public as to my feelings in regard to Great Britain about which my Uncle Edward VII. was trying to make capital by representing them as absolutely hostile, and thus reconciling his own subjects to his ambitious plans of a Franco-Russian and English alliance directed against Germany. I merely told the journalist who was sent to talk with me that far from being hostile to England, I had offended large sections of my own people by my friendship for her. I gave, as an example of this fact, my refusal to receive the Boer delegates and my rejection of the proposals made by France and Russia for a joint intervention to stop the

South African war. I mentioned the fact that at an early stage of that war I had myself drawn a plan of campaign for the British and sent it on to Windsor, and it was at that time too that I made the suggestion of an eventual coöperation of the British and German fleets in the Far East. Well, I imagined that this interview of mine would not be noticed in Berlin, but I found out that for once I was mistaken, and a storm of abuse broke out in consequence of it. In France, Russia and Japan it also produced a profound sensation, and von Bülow handed me his resignation, which, however, I refused to accept, and on the contrary called upon him to try and smooth matters over. This he did, I regret to say, in a manner that wounded me most deeply and will take me a long time to forget. He need not have assured the Reichstag that henceforth I would not speak about politics without having beforehand conferred with my responsible Ministers. Why did he use this expression, "responsible"? As if any one but myself could be responsible for my actions or my words! I am sorry to find that after all the sacrifices which I have made for my Fatherland I am still misunderstood. But time will do its work and the day will come when in Germany no one will think about Chancellor or Ministers, but only of my own person; when my

great work shall be recognised and endorsed by the whole of the German nation.

*March 3d, 1909.*

I derived a certain satisfaction last month from the visit of my Uncle King Edward, accompanied by the Queen. I had tried for a long time to get him to come, as I felt persuaded that this step of his would to a considerable degree discourage the warlike disposition of the French Government, and, moreover, offend the French people by making them think that England and its Sovereign were trying to keep upon good terms with everybody and, to use a vulgar French expression, to "*ménager la chèvre, le chou et le loup.*" This made me try to lend unusual brilliancy to this long wished-for appearance of my uncle and aunt in Berlin. To tell the truth, I hated the idea of having to spend money in entertaining them, but at the present moment I require more than ever to throw dust in the eyes of the whole world. I was, however, rewarded for my trouble, because my uncle whilst lunching at the British Embassy had an attack of suffocation and I ascertained by questioning, cleverly and with tact, his medical attendant and getting him also to confer with my own doctor, that the health of the King leaves

very much to be desired and that, in fact, he has not any chances of a long life before him. This was most welcome news. If once my uncle is removed, then one of my principal enemies will be put out of my way, and the fear of a general European conflagration will be lessened, in so far that it will dispose of the danger of England taking part in a Continental war. This is a pleasant discovery that I have made, and it added considerably to the warmth of my leave-taking of my uncle. I was thinking when bidding him *adieu* that perhaps it was the last time I should perform this ceremony, and the idea was an exceedingly agreeable one to me.

*July 10th, 1909.*

I talked to-day most seriously with Herr von Bohlen-Hallbach-Krupp, the husband of Bertha Krupp. I asked him to come to Berlin on purpose to confer with him on the subject of our armements. I wished to do so personally, not trusting to the reports which the General Staff and Artillery Commission are constantly making regarding the construction of the new heavy guns which we have decided to adopt for the army. I was, however, very much disappointed on hearing that it would require at least seven or eight years

longer of continual experiments before we could be quite sure of their efficaciousness. It seems that the young engineer whom the Krupps have engaged has invented a new heavy gun capable of shelling the enemy's position at a distance of more than one hundred miles, which of course would guarantee for us the absolute success of any campaign in which we might find ourselves engaged. But though all the plans of this gun are ready, though even one has been built, one cannot yet be sure that some accident or other will not happen, and the invention must be experimented with for some years—yes, years—before we can rely on its efficaciousness. This is very annoying, because it will mean years of self-restraint for me and also the fear of any untoward accident interfering with my long-prepared plans. It will also mean fights with the Reichstag that is already grumbling at the immense credits which the government asks it to vote for the needs of the army. Besides, I fear that there is now a growing uneasiness prevailing in the whole of Europe which might bring about a crisis before we are quite prepared to meet it. Germany also begins to think that she requires something in exchange for all the sacrifices which we are asking her to make, and if we delay too long then internal complications may arise that



would hamper us in our work. I asked Hallbach-Krupp whether there was no possibility of hurrying on with the experiments he had mentioned to me, but though he promised to discuss the question with his engineer (whom, by the way, I told him I wanted to know) he could hold out no promise to me that it would be possible, and kept repeating that in cases of the kind one could only proceed when one had certainty on one's side, and that his conscience as a German did not allow him to tell me that such a certainty existed at present or could exist for a long time to come.

*May 7th, 1910.*

Last night my uncle, King Edward VII., died in London. I was prepared for this event, for I had been told by several doctors, among others by the physicians who had seen and treated him in Marienbad, that he could not live very much longer. But just the same the news that he had passed away came as a great relief to me. Ever since his accession to the throne of Great Britain, and especially after his famous visits to Paris and to Reval, where he completely won over to his way of thinking my good Cousin Nicholas, who, as we all know, is invariably of the opinion of the last person with whom he has spoken, the

activity displayed by the King had been a cause of intense worry to me as well as to my advisers. Prince von Bülow in particular was always repeating to me that the one real danger which threatened the German Empire was England and the policy pursued by my uncle, who seemed to have quite forgotten the great principle which his mother, the late Queen Victoria, always kept before her eyes, i.e., the irresponsibility of the Sovereign in matters of foreign politics. The King, on the contrary, adopted a policy of his own, something like the one pursued by Louis XV. in France, which consisted in having, besides his regular ambassadors, secret envoys who were personally instructed by him as to what they were to do. My uncle was undoubtedly a clever man, but he was also an intriguing one—in fact, nothing delighted him more than to find himself engaged, unknown to his Ministers, in some secret negotiation which meant another visit to a foreign court and more good dinners to eat. He was always a “gourmet” and could tell at once whether fresh butter or some inferior kind had been used in making one of the sauces of which he was so fond. Without him it is quite possible that the attention of the French Government would not have been attracted to many things which have been going on here. Without him it

is quite probable that I might have induced my Cousin Nicholas to conclude with me that alliance which might have allowed me to proceed in peace and without hurry to certain preparations with which I am busy at present. But King Edward was always a thorn in my side, and I am not at all sorry that death has claimed him at last. He was always a terrible meddler in what did not concern him, and, though he tried hard to be dignified, yet he did not understand what dignity meant, in the sense I do, in the sense the Hohenzollerns have always done. It is therefore useless for me to say that I am not glad that Providence has removed him, and Its decree has been met by me with complete submission. Of course I shall go to London for the funeral. Then I shall be able to ascertain what are the intentions of the British Government in regard to the future, and perhaps to allay any apprehensions which might exist there in regard to the intentions of Germany.

*May 25th, 1910.*

I am back from London. The funeral went off very well, and all the world and his wife attended it. Everybody was most cordial to me, and I returned here quite reassured as to the intentions of

the British Ministry for the future. We all agreed that the prospects of peace had never been so firm as they stand now, and we also agreed that it was to my late uncle that credit was due. He received all the praise which is generally awarded to dead men, and to monarchs when they ascend the throne, for they are then supposed to be endowed with all possible qualities, no one having yet had opportunity to discover their faults. But the removal of my uncle opens for me a new field of political activity and imposes upon me new responsibilities, for which I must seriously prepare myself.

*August 7th, 1910.*

To-day I had a most interesting conversation with Admiral von Tirpitz in regard to the new submarine boats which we have been building. He considers them the most powerful instruments of defense, as well as of attack, of modern warfare, and he has assured me that if ever we come to war with England an active submarine campaign would be the best means to reduce proud Albion into submission. I begin to think that really Germany is the object of the special protection of Providence. Our German God is giving us the possibility of extending our Empire all

over the world, even over the waves of the ocean! How can we be thankful enough to Him for this? As time goes on, I seem to feel more and more the solemnity of the mission which it has pleased the Almighty to confer upon me, of the great mission which consists in making the whole of the world submissive to Germany and dependent on German Kultur for its existence. I mean to be the greatest conqueror and the greatest monarch of whom history shall treasure the remembrance. I mean to bring to a conclusion the work begun by my splendid ancestors and predecessors—the Great Elector, Frederick II., and my glorious grandfather. I mean to carry the German flag where no one could ever imagine it would float, and to be proclaimed during my lifetime the equal of Alexander the Great, Cæsar, and Napoleon. It is of the latter that I have always felt jealous. He knew how to subdue the world, and he did it while still a young man, whilst I have had to wait until I have reached middle age before I can even begin to think that the day is near when I can at last take the place which belongs to me by right—in Europe at present and in history later on. I feel the moment approaching when I shall be able to throw off the mask and lead my people towards new triumphs and new victories. I have already

achieved one of the tasks which I had imposed upon myself: I have brought our navy up to an equality, or almost so, with the English navy. I have, moreover, assured myself of a weapon which the British so far have not acquired, or at least have not sufficiently developed, viz.: submarines. No one so far, except myself and my advisers, has realised what importance the submarine could attain in case of any international complications which would necessitate England allying herself with our enemies. The submarine is a jewel of inestimable value. It allows us to destroy at will the ships of our foes, and with these ships to sink some of their best hopes.

This is not all. Besides submarines, we have our new guns, or at least we shall have them in a not too distant future. We have our wonderful army, and the courage, patience and determination of the German people, which will not fail us in the hour of danger. The army is beginning to tire, however, of inaction, having been compelled to exist for forty years without warfare. The German nation fears to-day that it has been neglected by its monarchs, that sufficient care has not been taken of its commercial interests; and it will welcome any efforts which I shall make to insure for it a new prosperity, together with a new field for its trading and industrial faculties.

I begin to see my way ahead of me, which somehow I have not done for the last five years or so.

*July 8th, 1911.*

I have just returned from a visit to Essen, where I inspected the Krupp works. The new engineer whom they engaged about three years ago, Professor Rausenberger, was presented to me, and I had a long talk with him concerning the new guns he is working at. They will most certainly be one of the greatest inventions of this century. If the Professor is not mistaken, it will become possible from a distance of considerably more than one hundred miles to shell any point one may wish to attack. He has also another gun specially constructed to be used against fortifications, and he assures me that no fortress in the world will be able to resist its shells. But . . . he requires another two years at least to bring these new weapons to a state of absolute perfection, and one of the difficulties which he fears is the impossibility of keeping secret the construction of those marvellous guns. About this last point I reassured them. We employ only officers in Krupp's works, and no Prussian officer has ever proved untrue to his oath or committed an indiscretion. Our wonderful military training

has imbued our whole army with a spirit of obedience which nothing can shake. I am therefore absolutely assured as to the impossibility of any indiscretion revealing to our enemies the work we are engaged in. What I dread much more is that we shall not be able to wait until it is completed before we find ourselves confronted by the necessity of defending ourselves against the premeditated aggression which at this moment is in the thoughts of France, Russia, and—who knows?—perhaps even of England. I see also new complications looming in the distance in regard to the Balkan question, and it will not be an easy matter to restrain Austria, who has been constantly harassed by Servia since she annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, and who at last declares herself tired by the everlasting squabbles which prevent her from introducing into her new provinces several reforms for which she is anxious. Now an intervention of Austria into the affairs of any of the small nationalities, one more troublesome than the other, who have since immemorial times kept the Balkans in a state of perpetual fomentation, would mean a general conflagration which it would not suit me at all to see burst out just now. I have still a good deal to do before I can risk starting a war, and the next two or three years are going to be full of anxiety for



me. There is also another matter which troubles me, and that is the conduct of my son, the Crown Prince. He is trying to make himself popular in the army at my expense and persuading it that I feel afraid to begin a war which the interests of Germany imperatively require, if only on account of the impossibility of the country to go on paying the military expenses which are laid on its shoulders. My son has repeated several times to me that he feels convinced the Reichstag will not allow any of the credits we may ask it to grant us in the future. Already the nation is grumbling and lamenting over the enormous taxes it is compelled to pay. Its patience may at last become exhausted, which would mean the collapse of the plan we have so carefully prepared for so many years. And my son would like to prove to me, and to the whole world, that he has also some of the warlike capacities for which the Hohenzollerns have always been famous. This young man may yet cause me some trouble, and I should not care for him to become a Sovereign before the great work of the establishment of German supremacy all over the world had been completed. I have always felt that this work had been destined for me by Providence, and I begin unfortunately to realise that I am getting old and that I may die before we are quite ready to begin the

last and supreme drive which will make of us the masters of the universe. It is this which has made me impatient with the Krupp people, who are not hurrying with their work as I would have liked to see them do.

*January 7th, 1912.*

I had to-day a most interesting conversation with one of the heads of our Secret Intelligence Department, and all that he related to me pleased me enormously. It seems that our offers to provide Russia with guns and ammunition have been accepted by the Russian War Office and are being executed with celerity. The contract was signed in great secret, thanks to a liberal commission which was promised to certain high and influential personages, and France, always eager to learn what was being done in the way of armaments of her ally, never heard about our negotiations until it was too late; otherwise she would have interfered and stopped us. She is always seeking to sell the works of her famous Creusot, but she has not mastered the fact that in order to sell anything in Russia one must do so at a very low price to the intermediaries who secure one a contract, and at a very high price to the government. France is never practical as Germany has inva-

riably shown herself to be. Now that we have these famous orders, we shall see that they are executed in such a way that every one of the guns which Krupp shall send to Russia will have one small flaw that will make it useless when employed, and every shell shall have been constructed so that its effect will be absolutely nil. This is an admirable work and has been admirably carried out. Furthermore, our Intelligence Department has contrived to get hold of all the plans of the line of fortresses which defend the western frontier of Russia, so that we shall be able to attack them, if need be, at the very points where they are the easiest to take by storm or otherwise. Altogether I feel to-day much happier in my mind than I have been for a long time, and believe that we are fairly launched on the road toward building up that new Germany which I mean to leave to my descendants when I die.

*December 31st, 1912.*

I am glad that this year is coming to an end. It has been an anxious one for me, and God knows I have had more trouble than any man could have borne, with the exception of myself, in keeping the world quiet during the twelve months closing to-day. There has been this

Balkan affair, which very nearly drove the whole of Europe into war, revolted as she was by the fratricide struggle going on between Servia, Bulgaria and Greece. Public opinion in Russia has been very much excited at what the little Slav brethren were doing, and the excitement against Austria reached immense proportions in St. Petersburg, where Servian agents, such as former Minister for Home Affairs of the late King Milan, Mr. Guentitch, have been actively intriguing the whole of last summer. But, thanks to my efforts, and to the influence which I have brought to bear in Vienna, things have somehow arranged themselves, and I am enabled to wait for the favourable moment to come out of the reserve in which I have maintained myself all these years. I am now looking forward to a great meeting of the Tsar Nicholas and my Cousin George of England, who have both promised me to come to Berlin to attend my daughter's marriage with Ernest of Cumberland; another stroke of genius such as I have sometimes which has brought about the reconciliation of my House with that of Hanover and at the same time secured for my child the many Guelph millions that I was compelled to surrender to their owners. I want this marriage to be a wonderful affair, and I want to use this opportunity to persuade my two relatives

once more that I am the most peaceful monarch Germany ever had and that it was thanks to my strenuous efforts during the last twelvemonth that peace, which for a few weeks was in such imminent danger of being disturbed, was secured for a further term of years. I mean to show myself once more a wise Sovereign, incapable of nursing any dreams of conquest liable to disturb the equilibrium of Europe. Besides, I begin to feel that for the present I desire nothing, because I know at last that I shall soon have everything; and this knowledge is most soothing. I wish I could inspire in my son the same feeling of confidence which I have in a great future where the name of Germany shall be one to conjure with and where there will exist but one great power and might in the world, that of Prussia and of the Hohenzollerns. He is impatient, like all young men when they find themselves placed between their duty and their ambition, and in my secret heart I cannot blame him as much as I seem to him to do. Perhaps if I were in his position I should not show myself as patient as he does under the many provocations which he receives.

*June 1st, 1913.*

My daughter is married and has left us. It was both for the Empress and for myself a very trying time, and we felt deeply the parting from her, though she does not go outside of Germany, and we shall be able to see as much of her as we like. Still, a married daughter has interests of her own, and the day she leaves the house of her parents there comes to an end a chapter in the latter's lives. Added to the sorrow which we naturally experienced in saying good-bye to Victoria was the fact that we had to be, so to say, on our best behaviour, and to occupy ourselves with the many guests who had come to Berlin to be present at the marriage ceremony. For the first time the Berlin Castle saw an Emperor of Russia and a King and Queen of England simultaneously under its roof. I spared nothing to make the meeting a memorable one, and I was glad to find that any prejudices which my Russian and English cousins may have entertained against me disappeared during the few days that we were together. I convinced them that I had passed the time when one risks an adventure and that, besides, neither myself nor Germany required anything from our neighbours; that on the contrary I considered the moment had come when we ought all of us to be working towards the devel-

opment of trade and industry in our respective Empires, and trying to thwart the progress of socialism, which was becoming everywhere more and more active, and against which all the conservative elements in Europe ought to rise up, so as to crush it before it became a general and universal danger. This appealed especially to my Cousin Nicholas, who has always before his eyes the spectre of nihilism and anarchism, that already once during his reign made such havoc among his subjects. My Cousin George is not so anxious on this point. English Monarchy seems to think itself invulnerable, and I think that he worries more about the Irish question than at the idea a revolution may break out in England with any chances of success. Altogether the visit passed off in a charming manner and all seemed pleased with one another when they bid good-bye to me, and repeated how much they had enjoyed their stay in Berlin. War seemed at last to be far from everybody's thoughts, and everybody forgot that there exist such things in the world as submarine boats and the Krupp guns, such as are built by Professor Rausenberger.

*December 24th, 1913.*

This is Christmas Eve, and I have had some very joyful news to make it one of unmixed pleasure to me. I heard this morning from Krupp that at last our big gun is ready and able to fulfil any work it may please us to have it perform. After years of experiments the weapon has been brought to a state of absolute perfection, and together with its younger sister, which I have proposed to call Bertha, after Mrs. von Bohlen-Hallbach, it can now be called upon to win for us the next war in which we shall find ourselves engaged. I cannot say what a relief it was to me to learn this. I had, besides, another piece of excellent news: Tirpitz telegraphed to me that the construction of our new submarines was proceeding very well and quickly indeed, and that he thought we might be able in cases of emergency to turn out more than *five hundred* of these little toys in the course of a month. I felt that this was a good end to a year which, though full of anxieties, has yet been a happy and peaceful one for me. I wonder where I shall be next Christmas, and I wonder what will be taking place this day twelvemonth.



*June 25th, 1914.*

I am now in Kiel for the Regatta week. An English squadron has come here, to my great pleasure, and I have been happy to appear on board its Admiral ship in my uniform of a British Admiral. I mean to give after to-morrow a dinner for Sir George and Lady Maud Warrender and for the English visitors who have come to Kiel on their yachts. The American Ambassador, Mr. Gerard, is also expected, and of course he will have to be asked also. I am fond of these Kiel gatherings, as I have had an opportunity to make many friends and to learn a great amount of useful things every time I have been here for occasions of the same kind. It is a delightful way of spending one's vacation to be free from care on the sea. I mean later on to go to Norway and to enjoy myself there for another few days, after which the deluge may come for aught I care. I think it probable that it is on its way now, this deluge about which no one among my visitors and guests seems to trouble. Well, perhaps this is for the better. I also shall try not to think of the future. It was enough to discuss it at Konopischt, where I must say that I did not find Francis Ferdinand at all willing to enter into my views or to accept my opinion that it would be madness on our part not to use the present opportunity to

establish German rule all over Europe, when it will be a relatively easy matter, because neither France nor Russia is in a condition to oppose any resistance to our armies, and when England is so occupied with the Irish and the Suffragette questions that she must perforce disinterest herself from what goes on in Europe. Now is the time to break Slav influence and Russian intrigues in the Balkans, and to put Turkey definitely out of reach of the everlasting threat which Russia has for so many years kept hanging over her head. My understanding with the Sultan is complete, and he has promised me that when I give him the signal he will throw in his fate with ours and attack Russia before she has time to realise what is happening to her. But Francis Ferdinand, though hating all that is connected with the Slav cause, did not at all fall in with my views that the time had come when we ought to make an effort to get rid of the Servian and the Russian danger with the same blow and also to put France out of possibility of asserting herself before at least half a century. I have felt all along that both Count von Moltke and my teacher of military tactics, Captain von Hindenburg (who since then has become a general and has even been placed by me on the retired list), were both right when they said that we had made a great mistake

in showing ourselves so lenient in regard to France in 1870. It was only preparing ourselves for all the dangers of another war to allow her to get off as easily as we did. At present the whole thing has to be fought anew, because we cannot permit the Franco-Russian alliance to go on and the French army to be rendered more effective than it is already by the establishment of the three years' service. I exposed all this to the Archduke, and even pointed out to him all the advantages which Austria might obtain through a war with Russia, advantages that would secure her supremacy in the Balkans and perhaps even procure to her some other compensations in Italy and elsewhere. But he did not seem to agree with me, and I really do believe that all he thinks and cares for is to have his wife recognised later on as Queen of Hungary, and his children declared able to succeed to his crown. He will not attempt anything that might jeopardise his popularity until he has attained this goal of his consort's ambition. All these Hapsburgs have not the least sense of duty, and they will sacrifice nothing at all for their Fatherland. They are not like the Hohenzollerns, who have continually and all through their history put Prussia before their personal interests. I cannot tell why, but all the time that I was at Konopischt I kept

thinking of Sophy Goertz, and wondering what she would have said had she been alive at the present moment. Poor woman! It seems to me sometimes that she was the only being who really loved me in a disinterested manner and that I sacrificed her to my thirst for conquest. And yet it was not for that alone that I refused to do what she asked me. I had a higher and, I may say, a purer motive in not yielding to her entreaties. I was thinking of my Fatherland, of my great, my wonderful Germany, whose supremacy could not be too dearly bought. I felt that it would be wrong on my part not to set it above everything else, and I felt that I should be sacrificing my country if I succumbed to the influence of the only woman who has made my heart beat with anxiety and emotion, of the only woman for whose sake I should have considered the world well lost if I had not been a German Emperor and a King of Prussia for whom duty towards his subjects ought to remain the first consideration. At present I have done with all these weaknesses; I have surmounted temptation, and I can stand firm and determined before the great task which I have to perform, a task I shall bring to a successful issue, no matter how many tears it may cost, how much suffering it may entail, how terrible the distress it may occasion to others, as

well as to myself. There is no turning back for me, and I must go on, with the help of God, our God, who has never yet failed any Prince of my House in the hour of danger.

*June 29th, 1914.*

I have always felt that the protection of the Almighty comes to the help of my country and often to myself in moments of perplexity. Last night I received the news that the Archduke Francis Ferdinand together with his wife, the unfortunate Sophy Hohenberg, had been assassinated at Sarajevo. At first I was stunned, and then I wondered at the inscrutable ways of Providence who sometimes clears the path of those whom He has selected for the performance of great things of any hindrances that stand between them and the accomplishment of their mission. Francis Ferdinand would always have proved an obstacle in my path inasmuch as he had an iron will, and the firm determination to prevent his uncle from plunging Austria into any kind of complications. I cannot understand how it could have been possible for any one to think that the Archduke had warlike instincts. Why the very sight of him, and of his heavy face and figure, was sufficient to prove that the only thing

he cared for was his own personal comfort. Old Emperor Francis Joseph is far more aggressive than ever was his nephew. This murder, cruel though it is, will perhaps be the means of bringing about great blessings upon the world which stands at last before the alternative of perishing, together with its false civilisation, or of accepting the blessings of German Kultur. I telegraphed my condolences to the Austrian Sovereign and decided to leave Kiel and return to Berlin immediately. I feel that I shall be called upon in the next few days to make grave resolutions and I must see my Chancellor and other Ministers.

*July 3d, 1914.*

I did not go to Vienna for the funeral. I heard that there would likely be friction connected with it, and I dislike the strict etiquette of the Hofburg; I also judged it more prudent to abstain from intruding upon the privacy, if not the sorrow, of Francis Joseph. I decided that I would not give up my trip to Norway, but on the contrary try to snatch up there a breath of fresh air and get a rest before the exertions which most probably await me. Before my departure I had some conversation with the heads of our Intelligence Department, and with General von Moltke,

the Chief of our General Staff. I also summoned Herr von Hallbach-Krupp to Berlin, and we had a long discussion, after which I came to the conviction that at last Germany was perfectly ready and able to fight both France and Russia at the same time, and that we ought to seize the first opportunity for declaring war. Of course such an opportunity can present itself in the next few days if the Austrian government, as I have urged it to do through my Ambassador in Vienna, Herr von Tschirsky, insists on Servia giving her guarantees that murders such as that of the Archduke will not be planned any more on her soil. An apology is not sufficient and the punishment of the criminals is also not enough. Austria's desire to obtain supreme control of the Servian government, and of Servian affairs, must be acceded to, and if King Peter refuses to submit, then he must look to himself for the consequences which must and will follow. The great question is whether Russia will look with unconcern upon Servia becoming absorbed by Austria. If she does not, then . . . then . . . well then very probably the great opportunity which I have been seeking for the last few months will arrive, and I may begin to execute the great and admirable programme which alone can make of Germany the paramount power in the whole world.

*July 24th, 1914.*

I have made up my mind to go back to Berlin, much as I should have liked to remain a little longer in those wonderful Norwegian Fjords I love so much. But matters are beginning to boil at home, and I hear that in St. Petersburg they are clamouring for my return, and saying that I am the only person who can unravel the intricacies of a situation which very soon will become inextricable. The Austrian ultimatum was presented to the Servian Government on the 22nd of this month, and, according to the telegrams which I have received, it has produced in the whole of Europe the same impression as a thunder clap on a beautiful summer day would have done. It seems that some people say that Berchtold must have gone mad. But at the same time it is expected that Servia, acting on the advice of Russia, will show herself most conciliating and yield all that it is possible for her to yield. This of course would never do, and one of the reasons why I consider it indispensable to return is that I may watch very closely what they are doing at the Ball Platz and encourage them there to remain absolutely firm. My good Cousin Nicholas has, it seems, promised the Servian Crown Prince that Russia will not withdraw from the fate of Servia, but this may mean any-



thing or nothing. I have in the meanwhile caused the War Office to issue orders for secret mobilisation which allows us to organise ourselves for a coming war without outsiders hearing about it. And, according to the news I received this morning, these orders were already sent out on the 17th of this month, that is, five days previous to the presentation of the Austrian ultimatum. So we are prepared for anything that may occur, and this is as it should be.

*July 28th, 1914.*

Things are assuming an aspect which entirely pleases me, though I must confess that the attitude of the British government causes me some anxiety. I gave orders to Bethmann-Holweg to try to obtain from Sir Edward Goschen a promise of neutrality on the part of England, guaranteeing in return not to attack France. Of course I know very well that this will come to nothing, but I wish to have done everything possible in appearance to prevent the outbreak of a conflict which of course will mean the total annihilation of both France and Russia. In regard to the latter country, I hear most encouraging reports. The condition of the army is anything but good. The troops are not provided with weapons or

ammunition in sufficient quantities, and the artillery is in a most defective state, lacking big guns and experienced officers. But this does not seem to trouble my good Cousin Nicholas, or else he is not aware of it, because it seems that not only did he encourage President Poincaré in the aggressive designs the latter has always nourished against us, but he has declared that he would never submit, or allow Servia to submit, to Austrian insolence. Public opinion seems very much excited in St. Petersburg and I am doing my best, through the agents which we have there, to keep it in this condition.

*July 30th, 1914.*

My Chancellor has just left me, after having reported to me the substance of the conversations which he had with Goschen yesterday and to-day, conversations during which he tried hard to make the British Ambassador see that in presence of the attitude of Russia we could not do anything else but uphold the just claims of Austria. These English are really extraordinary creatures; they will not admit opportunism in certain cases, nor understand that treaties are only binding when it is to the advantage of those who have signed them to respect them. For

instance we cannot in presence of the grave dangers which threaten us (and indeed the very existence of the German Empire) give any promise not to violate the neutrality of Belgium. Our safety will most probably require us to go through Belgian territory in order to get to Paris as soon as possible, and before the French have had time to rally and concentrate their army. Goschen did not seem to understand this, according to what Bethmann-Holweg has just told me, and he kept repeating that a treaty was a treaty, as if any treaty could be taken into consideration when the safety of Germany comes into question.

In the meantime I have just heard that Russia is mobilising, and this, not merely on the Austrian frontier, but everywhere, a sure sign that she means to attack Germany. I do not care for the assurances of my Cousin Nicholas that he has no evil intentions in regard to my Empire. Such assurances mean nothing, at least they would mean nothing from me, and my cousin the Tzar is certainly not a better man than I am.

*July 31st, 1914.*

I have spent a sleepless night. I feel that I stand on the eve of having to make the gravest decision of my whole reign. I am go-

ing deliberately to plunge half of Europe into one of the most terrible wars of which history will keep the record. It is a resolution of such stupendous importance that though I have been contemplating it for years and though I have prepared myself for it also for years, yet a dread which I cannot subdue seems to go through my whole body at the very thought that the hour has struck at last when my destiny is going to be accomplished together with that of the nation and of the Empire over which I rule. I have known from the very first moment I ascended the throne that the day would come when I would have to follow the example set me by my glorious ancestors, and draw the sword in order to insure against any possible future aggression the country whose fate lay in my hand. I have wanted to secure every possible chance for my side, and have subdued all the instincts which during these long years have urged me so often to go ahead, because my reason told me that it would be madness to enter upon such a struggle without an absolute certainty to win it. I have this certainty to-day, and I mean to go on ruthlessly and mercilessly, because in the long run the best mercy which one can show to an enemy is to threaten him with complete destruction unless he submits; and to destroy him, if he resists.

Terror is the best and the surest means to win a war; so I intend to strike terror all around me and to bring about the ruin of Germany's adversaries in as short a time as possible. If Belgium, encouraged by France and Great Britain, tries to defy us, then we shall destroy Belgium until not a stone remains of her old cities and historical monuments. If France fights desperately, we shall transform France into a desert, a waste worse than the one left by Attila and his warriors. But we shall win this war in a few weeks, after which no one in the wide world, in Heaven or in Hell, will ever dare to challenge the German people in the future. The world must belong to us and to us alone, and there must be henceforward only one civilisation and one culture, the German civilisation and the German "kultur." One God, and that is the German God.

I have been thinking of all this during the night, when it was impossible for me to close my eyes owing to the tumultuous thoughts which came crowding into my brain. And all the time I seemed to see the pale, grave, and lovely face of Sophy Goertz, and to hear her voice urging me to pause, not to plunge the whole of the world into an ocean of misery such as it had never known before; not to cause the tears of millions of innocent beings to flow; not to sacrifice mil-

lions of human lives to my inordinate ambition. It was a bitter fight, and one which has left me quite exhausted, but nevertheless determined. I ought not to have any moment of weakness; I ought to remember all the great issues which are at stake. Either I shall become the Sovereign master of an Empire that will stretch from the North Sea to the Bosphorus and Asia Minor; that will acquire the control of the Baltic, and of the whole of Scandinavia; that will confine to the depths of Asia the power of Russia, and keep in check that of Great Britain; or I shall perish under the ruins which will be made. There is no choice for me, no road that I can take, except one of these two. And I feel so entirely that the protection of the Almighty will not desert me, that I am going on unhesitatingly and remorselessly until at last the omnipotence of Germany will have been established so firmly that the whole of humanity will recognise that the best thing it can do is to submit to us, and to our God, to whom alone we shall owe all our successes.

This whole day has been spent in a constant agitation which cannot be described. To-night at seven o'clock I signed the decree declaring that our Fatherland was in a condition of war, "Kriegsgefahrzustand," and I ordered Bethmann-Holweg to telegraph to Pourtalès in St. Peters-

burg a peremptory demand that Russia should demobilise within twelve hours. Of course she cannot do it, and even a weak man like my Cousin Nicholas cannot comply with such a demand, the insolence of which I fully understand and realise.

In sending this ultimatum I knew that I was destroying the last chance of peace which might yet have existed, but in presence of the immense advantages a victorious war will mean for our beloved Fatherland I felt that hesitation would have been a crime, and I am not a criminal, I am happy to say.

*August 1st, 1914.*

This morning I had long conferences with Moltke and my War Minister. We sent orders to the commanders of the Troops (who have been for about ten days massed on the Russian frontier) to cross that frontier at two o'clock in the afternoon, that is at the very moment when we shall telegraph to St. Petersburg our orders to Count Pourtalès to deliver the declaration of war which has been in his hands for a week. The orders for the general mobilisation of the army are also to be given at five o'clock to-day, which will not interfere with the advance of our army on Russian territory. This mobilisation is but a

sham, because our troops have been ready for a week to march, and in this war rapidity of motion must be kept up the whole time as it constitutes one of our best chances of success. Besides, there is always the dread that, in spite of our ultimatum, the Russian government will try to gain time and to demand a longer delay for demobilising, declaring itself ready to do so, if we can give it some hope that peace may still be preserved. Against this contingency the advance of our troops into Poland will prove the best guarantee. Once Kalisch and other frontier towns have been taken and sacked (orders have been sent to sack every city and village occupied by our soldiers) it will be difficult for the Tzar to do aught else but accept the challenge which we are sending to him and there will be no going back for either of us.

*Ten o'clock in the evening.*

We are at war with Russia, and very likely we shall be at war with France within the next few days. I have addressed my people from the balcony of the Palace and declared to them that henceforward I shall know parties no more, but consider that every German citizen is rushing to the defence of his glorious Fatherland. There is



no going back at present; the die is cast, and we must abide by the consequences of the resolution which my love for my country has made me adopt. I have no illusions as to what awaits me. I know fully the responsibility which I have assumed before my conscience, my subjects, and history. I know that I am exposing my name to execration such as has never been showered on any one since the days of Attila and his Huns, or Alaric and his Vandals. I am aware that I shall follow the example of these conquerors, that I shall destroy and ruin, and scatter devastation wherever I go. But the aim which I am pursuing is a sacred one. It is the establishment of German supremacy, of German might, of Germany's spirit of new civilisation, the worship of military power and of the forty-two inch guns which represent it, that I am seeking. All the rest does not count. France is to become a small state. England is to be despoiled of her supremacy and control of the seas; Russia is to cease to be a European power, and all the minor states which will be left in existence will have to become dependent on Germany for the means to live and to prosper. Berlin will be the centre of the world, and the Empire of Charlemagne will once more become a reality. It is indeed a splendid dream, well worth the sacrifices it will entail to transform

it into a reality, well worth the personal sacrifices I have made not to endanger its realisation. After we have won this war, there will not exist in the annals of history a conqueror whose glory will even approach that which will surround my name. Napoleon, Cæsar, Alexander, what will they be compared with me who will have subdued the world and made out of it a vassal and a servant of my own beloved Germany? No, I shall not allow any scruples to deter me from my task. I shall not tremble before the curses that will attend every one of my steps. I shall try to shut my eyes before the immensity of the disasters to others that I shall have provoked by my actions. I shall remain a true German hero, and I shall look to the German people to reward me for all that I shall have brought them of glory, of fame, of brilliant conquests, and of innumerable victories over their foes.

*August 5th, 1914.*

We have declared war against France; and England, though I had hoped to persuade her that we nourished no evil intentions in regard to her, has joined the ranks of our adversaries. Well, so be it! It is perhaps just as well to bring the whole matter to a crisis at once. But what I

cannot admit are the reproaches which Great Britain hurls at us on account of our invasion of Belgium. As if one would let treaties or promises stand in the way when one's interests required one to forget them!

I fail to understand how it is that there are yet people in the world who do not comprehend the great aims for which Germany is fighting to-day. This is not a war begun out of futile pretexts and which can be ended easily. It is the final and supreme struggle for the dominion of the whole world in which Germany had to become engaged, whether she liked it or not, unless she renounced the dreams of conquest that have haunted the minds of all the great German Sovereigns of whom history has kept the remembrance. We are a superior race, indeed we are THE superior race before which the whole of the universe must bend down, and whom it must worship. We had to fight our way through all difficulties, and we could not stop before such considerations as treaties, promises or guarantees, that we had been compelled to give in the past. Of course we have been attacked. This is what I have been telling my people and have tried to infuse into their minds; that we have been attacked in a most unwarrantable manner. The Russian mobilisation was directed against us Ger-

mans, far more than against Austria, whom Russia might have afforded to leave alone had it not been her desire to beat us Germans, whose existence has always been obnoxious to her. Well, it is no use thinking or speaking about all this any more. The die is cast, and since England wants to fight we shall show her what stuff we are made of. We shall smash at last that haughty nation who pretends to possess the exclusive dominion of the seas, and who thinks no one has any right to build ships or control the trade of the world except herself. I am already enjoying our future victories over the perfidious Albion, and I was glad indeed to hear that my people shared my sentiments, and that last night a whole crowd had gathered in front of the British Embassy in the Wilhelmstrasse and broken its windows. This was a real German action, and it proved to our enemies of what stuff Germany is made, and the direction in which the German spirit is running at present in this solemn hour in our history. "Destroy" ought to be henceforward our motto, and I was very satisfied to hear this morning from one of our Intelligence Officers who had come to me with a report on the first steps made by our army in Belgium, that my soldiers have taken to heart the permission which had been given to them to plunder Belgian towns,

and that they had conscientiously performed this mission. This is as it should be. We cannot fight this war with white gloves. We must win it quickly and swiftly, and the best way to do this is to strike terror wherever we go, to show the weight of our mailed fist to whomsoever we find in our way. After all what are a few towns more or less in the world? They can easily be built up again. And as for cathedrals and libraries, it is of course a pity if they suffer, but then this will be through the fault of their owners and not through ours. On the contrary, in burning cities down, we insure for the future work for the many people who will need it after the war has been won by us, and who will be employed for years clearing out the ruins. And it will also become possible to rebuild all those places according to the German taste, and thus give to our wonderful German architects the possibility and opportunity to distinguish themselves. But of course all this is but a "neben sache," the important thing is that we should persuade the whole of Europe that if she ventures to contradict us or to stand in our way, she runs the danger of absolute and quick destruction. As I told my generals, they must instil in the minds of the troops that no pity is to be shown to our adversaries. "Væ Victis," as Brennus exclaimed,

and I have said it already, this is the only sensible and reasonable manner to conduct a war. We must keep our pity for our own people, condemned to fight unscrupulous enemies who dare to say that they have been forced into a war which they have declared themselves, in fact if not in words, days before we at last picked up the gauntlet and decided to defend ourselves with that true German courage which is one of the characteristics of our valiant race.

*August 10th, 1914.*

Things are going on very well for us in Belgium and France at least. Our troops are steadily advancing and I believe that we ought to be in Paris sooner than we expected. In Eastern Prussia the situation is not quite so satisfactory, because the Russians have penetrated into the country as far as the Insterburg and have committed terrible devastations. They talk about the brutality of our soldiers, but it is child's play compared with the ruthlessness of the Russian troops. The Cossacks, especially, are reported to have made awful havoc of our beautiful, clean little Prussian villages, where such a peaceful population was quietly living out its existence, not thinking about war, or the possibility of becoming

its victims. I am worried about my faithful Eastern Prussia. All my best generals are for the present employed on the Western front, and I do not know what to do, nor whom to send to try to check the advance of the hordes of the Tzar. Moltke suggested that we should give a command to Hindenburg who has been now for the last three years on the retired list. I do not like the man who once during some manœuvres ventured to criticise certain dispositions which I had taken, but I know my duty, and once more I have put my own feelings aside for the good of our Fatherland, and have given orders that a telegram be sent to Hindenburg in Hanover, where he resides, acquainting him with the fact that he has been appointed commander-in-chief of our Eastern army. One of the considerations which also actuated me was the remembrance of what he had once told me in my young days, that we had been far too lenient in regard to France after our victorious campaign of 1870. This, when I think of it, proves to me that I may find in the General a good help and coöperator in my just views about an honourable peace, when the day comes for our concluding one. So I acquiesced in Moltke's suggestion and signed Hindenburg's appointment to the supreme command of our armies in the East.

This morning I received in special audience the United States Ambassador. He came to offer a mediation of his country, or some such piece of foolishness, for which I had to pretend that I felt grateful. I must say that I fail to see what Mr. Gerard, one of the greatest coxcombs it has ever been my fortune to meet, really wanted of me. It is just like their damned American impudence, to think that at this stage of the war, any interference from a neutral power could change anything to the state of affairs prevailing. We cannot, even if all our adversaries wished it, end the war to-day. This can only be done when our complete victory over our enemies has been so well established that nothing will be left for them but to throw themselves on our mercy, our German mercy. But of course appearances had to be preserved, and so I welcomed Mr. Gerard, and I even gave him an autographed message for the President, Mr. Wilson, in which I expressed myself as most grateful to him, and, if he realises what those words mean, he ought to feel proud indeed. Fancy me, the German Emperor, deigning to acknowledge that I was grateful to any one, for anything.

But, after having penned my reply to the President, I could not hide from Gerard that in my opinion the war was going to be a long one, be-



cause the entry of England into it had changed the whole situation. What amused me was that he seemed to think that this fact made me despondent, and that he tried to cheer me up by his obvious admiration of the German troops. He appeared to be quite enthusiastic, which made me think that at heart the Americans were with us in this war, which indeed is but natural, considering the fact that as a rule the world is always on the side of the winning party, no matter in what question.

*September 30th, 1914.*

I have had one of the greatest surprises in my life. We were on our way to Paris, and things were going on most comfortably. Indeed our advanced posts had already reached Compiègne and nowhere had we found any serious opposition, except in Belgium, where those obstinate people had persisted in defending their so-called neutrality, as if this neutrality had ever existed in face of the fact that it is very well known to us that France was about to invade Belgium, if we had not entered it ourselves. But the Belgians seemed to ignore this fact, and they tried to set up a resistance, and would not open to us of their own free will the gates of Liège or

of Namur. Of course this did not avail them, and it did not inconvenience us too much, because we had our wonderful new guns, those over the construction of which Professor Rausenberger had worked for so long a time. These guns did wonders, and even I, who knew all about them, was surprised at the excellent work which they performed. Our soldiers all love these guns, which they have familiarly called "Dicke Bertha," after Mrs. Krupp, in whose establishment they have been built. I had suggested they should be christened simply Bertha in honour of this gracious lady, but soldiers are sometimes facetious, and they added the adjective "Dicke," as a familiar allusion to her increasing stoutness. I must say that before we used these monsters I thought it necessary to place them under the special protection of our great German God, and I asked my chaplain, Doctor Dryander, to bless them and to speak a few words to the artillery men in charge of these remarkable weapons. This he did with his usual eloquence, and assured the soldiers that the very fact that their construction had been possible was a renewed proof that the Almighty was with us and wished to help us in conquering our enemies, with the help of German intelligence and German science. After this the first shot was fired by Professor Rausenberger

himself, and the result surpassed every expectation we had ever entertained in regard to the efficacy of these marvellous war instruments. Liège fell, and Namur also, in the space of a few days, and Germany won another victory, besides acquiring the possession of important fortresses.

This was very splendid, of course, but other disappointments awaited me. The French suddenly developed military talents which no one had ever suspected them of possessing, and General von Kluck, to whom I was preparing myself to send a congratulatory telegram on the fall of Paris, had to fall back before General Joffre, and to give up for the moment his drive towards the city. Of course we never expected this, and I shall most certainly place von Kluck on the retired list. I would like to have gone on as well as we began, but one must be prepared for such checks in war like the one we are fighting, and I feel sure that the whole German nation will look upon this reverse with the same eyes that I do, that is with the firm confidence that in time we shall overcome all our enemies. In Russia we are already doing so, because von Hindenburg has won one of these victories the remembrance of which will endure as long as the world lasts. People are upbraiding him for his treachery, and

saying that it was not fair to use strategy in order to push back the enemy into those Mazurian lakes upon which we had always looked as a natural means of defence Germany had at its disposal. But I, who consider this whole war from the point of view that it is our duty to win it, no matter by what means, cannot share this opinion, nor blame Hindenburg for what he has done. It seems that he was really merciless and that it was only after the two Russian armies, which we were lucky enough to destroy at once, had struggled for three days in the swamps into which he had lured them, that at last he brought his big guns into action and killed the miserable beings who were trying to get out of these awful lakes. Of course this seems to have been a cruel deed, but the question arises whether there is in general anything cruel in a war. If we look at it from a high, noble point of view we must say that cruelty is only a word and a prejudice. It is not cruel to use every possible weapon in order to end quickly a state of things which is only bringing misery on a multitude of human beings. It is not cruel to disarm an enemy so thoroughly that for years to come he cannot hope to be able to take revenge for his defeat. If we had observed this principle in 1870, we should not to-day be fighting this war. This has been a lesson

to me, and the German people will never be able to reproach me with having saddled them with a legacy of hatred such as the French nation has entertained in regard to us ever since the defeat which they suffered at Sedan.

*February 15th, 1915.*

The war is going on very well for us. The Russians have been definitely driven out of Eastern Prussia, and we are pushing forward in the most satisfactory manner. I have discussed the future of the campaign with our highest military authorities and they are agreed that if we only proceed without flinching with our programme such as it was from the first devised by our General Staff, we shall destroy all our enemies one after the other and emerge completely victorious out of this unprecedented war. Turkey has joined us and we have Bulgaria on our side. I do not fear the future at all. But I must say, the sight of all the ruins I have looked upon in Belgium, as well as in France, has moved me profoundly. War is indeed a terrible thing, and sometimes the thought crosses my mind whether the triumphs which Germany will obtain are worth the awful misery through which they will have won. I am sure that if a

man had not a deep sense of duty to sustain him, he would not be able to look on all this terrific sight. But duty helps one to go on, also the knowledge that one is striving for higher aims, that there is a reward awaiting him who stands firm, and does not allow false feelings of compassion to take supremacy in his mind. The only consideration which ought to touch a Sovereign is that of his country's welfare. When I looked upon the ruins of Belgian towns, when I saw the heaps of corpses strewn everywhere around me, there were moments when my heart faltered, and I would like to have stopped all this suffering, all this death, all this destruction. And then I remembered that others had wished to inflict all these calamities upon us Germans, that we were merely fighting a war of self-defence, that we had never been the aggressors, and that God was visibly on our side, because we were not fighting on German soil, because the enemy had not been able to profane our old German Fatherland, because our women and our children at least were spared the sufferings endured by those of all the nations that had attacked us. I therefore hardened my heart, and I am awaiting with confidence what the future will bring us in the way of new triumphs and new victories.

*May 8th, 1915.*

Very probably we will again be called barbarians on account of the sinking of the Lusitania. I will say at once that it was certainly a dreadful thing, and that I personally would never have given the order to attack a vessel which was carrying so many innocent passengers. But I have nothing to do with the instructions which are given by my Naval staff, to whom I must leave a certain latitude in its decisions. And after all, why do people make such a fuss about this Lusitania? There are more men killed in one single small and unimportant battle than there were in that ship, the destruction of which is but an incident in one vast tragedy. How can we hope to win this war if we stop before the consideration of sparing human lives? The only way we can carry it on mercifully is in showing ourselves merciless, and this I mean to do without flinching, painful though it may be. It seems that the United States are quite incensed against us, and ready also to declare war upon us. Let them do so. We have already so many enemies that one more or less leaves me absolutely indifferent. Their destruction will add only one more laurel leaf to my triumph. And the German people will not allow themselves to be scared. They know that they are fighting

for a just cause, and they stand ready for every sacrifice, thinking of the reward which will be theirs later on, when we shall be the masters of the earth. People would call me ambitious. Sophy Goertz said so; even my friends believe it, but when I think well over it, I discover that it is not personal ambition which actuates me, but ambition for my country, for my beloved Germany, for which I would willingly give my life, if by doing so I could ensure its prosperity, its greatness, and its superiority over all the other nations of the earth.

*September 20th, 1915.*

Well, I have fulfilled part of my task, and the Almighty has not forsaken me. Poland and Lithuania are in our hands, together with those wonderful fortresses of which my Cousin Nicholas was so proud, and Brest Litovsk, which the late Tzar Alexander III. showed me some thirty years ago, with the evident intention of scaring me. All these strongholds of Russian autocracy are now in my possession, and I shall soon be able to push further on, and to see our splendid German flag float over Riga, and our fleet have the uncontrolled ownership of the Baltic Sea. Where are the ships which England



was to send to oppose me? Where is that proud British fleet which was to bombard my coasts, and to bring me on my knees before the British Lion? Where are the armies of the Russian Tzar? Where is his steam roller which was to crush me and my troops to death in its march down the Polish plains? In presence of the un hoped for successes which have accompanied each one of our steps, we can but feel a deep gratitude to Providence who has allowed us to accomplish such great deeds. I hope my children will never forget what we owe to God Almighty, to our German God, who has constantly watched over us and always let us feel that we were under His special protection. It is to Him belongs the honour of the victories which will make out of the German name something to dread in the centuries to come. The German people will certainly emerge out of this period of terrible trial they are going through, more religious, more pious, but also more proud than ever, with this pride which is but the acknowledgment of one's own worth, and not arrogance as some people would like to consider it. I am sure that no one among my subjects regrets now the sacrifices he has made, or the blood that has been shed, or the tears that have flowed. Wives and mothers do not mourn their husbands or their sons, but feel happy to

think that by their death they helped Germany to become great, to acquire for itself a place in the world such as no nation ever had before.

*November 20th, 1916.*

The year that has gone by has of course brought much sorrow and much suffering to the German people, but it has brought us more glorious victories, and we can now see the end of this struggle looming on the horizon. We have again destroyed a nation. After Belgium, Servia and Montenegro, we have wiped Roumania from the map of Europe. This miserable little country, the Sovereign of which has forgotten that he was an Hohenzollern, is punished for its arrogance in daring to side with our enemies, and all its riches have fallen into our possession. The oil wells of which they were so proud, and which England thought she had acquired forever, these oil wells will now pour their contents into our hands. Our engineers are already working at them, and soon a new activity will reign where for the last months destruction has done its work. So we are progressing, not perhaps as rapidly as we had expected, but still with sure steps, and little by little we are acquiring the whole of Europe, which when this war is over, will be

transformed into a German province, and, who knows, perhaps even will acquire some of the great principles of German kultur, German science, German knowledge, and German efficiency. Then indeed the world will find itself safe from the horrors of another war, because I shall be able at last to accomplish my desire of reducing the military armaments of the world, and of putting an end to this military expenditure which has been such a drag upon the resources of every nation. Only Germany will have an army, which the rest of Europe shall not require. Only Germany will have soldiers who will keep order everywhere. This will be one of the blessings we shall owe to this war, which at present seems a curse, though in reality it is a mercy in disguise.

I have been annoyed recently by the fuss made over the execution of an English nurse in Brussels who abused the privileges of her condition to indulge in spying. Of course she had to be shot, and I fail to see why her sex ought to have shielded her from the consequences of her crime. The United States government is making quite a fuss over this incident, and they say that Miss Cavell's life ought to have been spared, at least until I had been appealed to and given the opportunity to exercise my royal prerogative of

mercy. I do not think so, and I consider that Bissing behaved like a good servant of his King in taking upon his shoulders the responsibility for this act of necessary justice, and in refusing to give to the United States Minister the possibility of communicating with me. What could I have done? The woman had been found guilty, there was nothing left to do but to shoot her as an example and a warning to others. How many innocent Germans have been put to death by the English and French governments as spies? Why should we, who are the objects of the attacks of the whole world, why should we alone be merciful, which in the present case would have only been stupid? No, I repeat it, this war must be prosecuted with absolute pitilessness on our side; any hesitation would only be construed as weakness, and we must not show ourselves weak at such a critical time.

*March 25th, 1917.*

A great event has taken place in the world, one of the greatest indeed that it has seen for a long time. My cousin, the Tzar, has been overturned by a Revolution which everybody but himself expected, but which no one could have believed to have been such an easy thing to

perform. Here we have again a new proof of the protection of Providence, that whenever we experience a check of some kind, invariably sends us some compensation or other. I shall not attempt to disguise that the breaking off of diplomatic relations with America, which means of course that they will declare war upon us in the near future, annoyed me exceedingly. Of course I do not fear anything that the United States may do, they have neither army nor officers, nor even the possibility to send troops to Europe, now that I am the complete master of the seas, thanks to my admirable submarines. But still I should like to have preserved friendly relations with the American government, and I fail to understand how it comes about that they would not understand in Washington that it is imperative to bring this war to an end as quickly as possible, and that the best means to bring England to her knees is to go on ruthlessly with our submarine campaign, and to make her feel that it is after all, *we*, and not *she* who controls the ocean. I can quite well realise that this must be painful for English pride, but must I take this fact into consideration? And as concerns the United States, they would have had at their disposal the best means to preserve the lives of American subjects if they had forbidden them to

travel, which cannot in any case be a pleasant thing in these troublous times. I suppose that some powerful arguments of which we know nothing have been brought to bear upon President Wilson, to make him decide to take such a grave step, arguments of the kind that were used by France when she persuaded England to declare war upon us under the pretext of defending Belgian neutrality. As if anybody could care for Belgian neutrality! This American complication is of course disagreeable, but I am quite confident, and my generals tell me that I ought to be confident, of our ultimate success, and of our ability to crush England and France before American soldiers can come to their help. The Russian Revolution is, in its way, the luckiest thing that could have happened to us, because I feel certain that we shall be able to employ with the new rulers of my cousin Nicholas's former empire means which with him could never have been thought of. Russian corruption will once more come to the front, and in a manner which can only be advantageous to us. We need only send across the Russian frontier all the Russian anarchists and socialists who have sought a refuge in Germany or in Switzerland, and we shall soon have the whole of Russia in our hands. I cannot say that I am not sorry for

the Tzar and for his family. It must be hard to be a prisoner in one's own palace, after having been for a quarter of a century an absolute autocrat. But then he was stupid to allow himself to be coerced into the ridiculous abdication he was induced to sign. I would never have believed that a Sovereign could forget so completely what he owed to his son and to his dynasty as Nicholas has done. Why could he not have resisted and declared that they could kill him but that he would never put his hand to his own degradation? I am thankful to say that a Hohenzollern would never have acted in such a cowardly way. We have in our family a sense of dignity which never deserts us. I wonder now what is going to happen in Russia, and whether it will take us a long time to conclude peace with her. It seems that the people there are thoroughly sick of the war, that the misery is terrible, and that the army (or rather what is left of it, for I am thankful to say that the formidable troops we had to fight at the beginning of the campaign have all been exterminated by us,) is completely demoralised and does not want to fight any longer. I mean to force my way now to Riga, and in the South to Odessa, and to seize the Southern provinces of the former Russian Em-

pire, out of which I shall be able to get the food stuffs which are becoming scarce with us at present in spite of all our economy and marvellous organisation. God has protected our efforts in such a visible manner up to now that I feel sure He will go on doing it until the end.

*February 15th, 1918.*

I am now awaiting the conclusion of peace with Russia, and with the new Ukrainian republic that has, thanks to our help, sprung into existence. I am thankful to say that we have entered the new year with far better prospects of victory and of a prompt end to this long war than we ever had before. The German flag is now floating over the best part of Russia, as well as in Roumania, Servia, Belgium and a great part of France. We have destroyed completely five out of the many nations who dared to declare war against us, and the two most important ones, France and England, are so exhausted that it will be easy to crush them completely, whenever we think that the time has come for striking our last and decisive blow. In the four years which have elapsed since that memorable August day, when I called upon the whole of the German nation to stand by me, and give me its entire



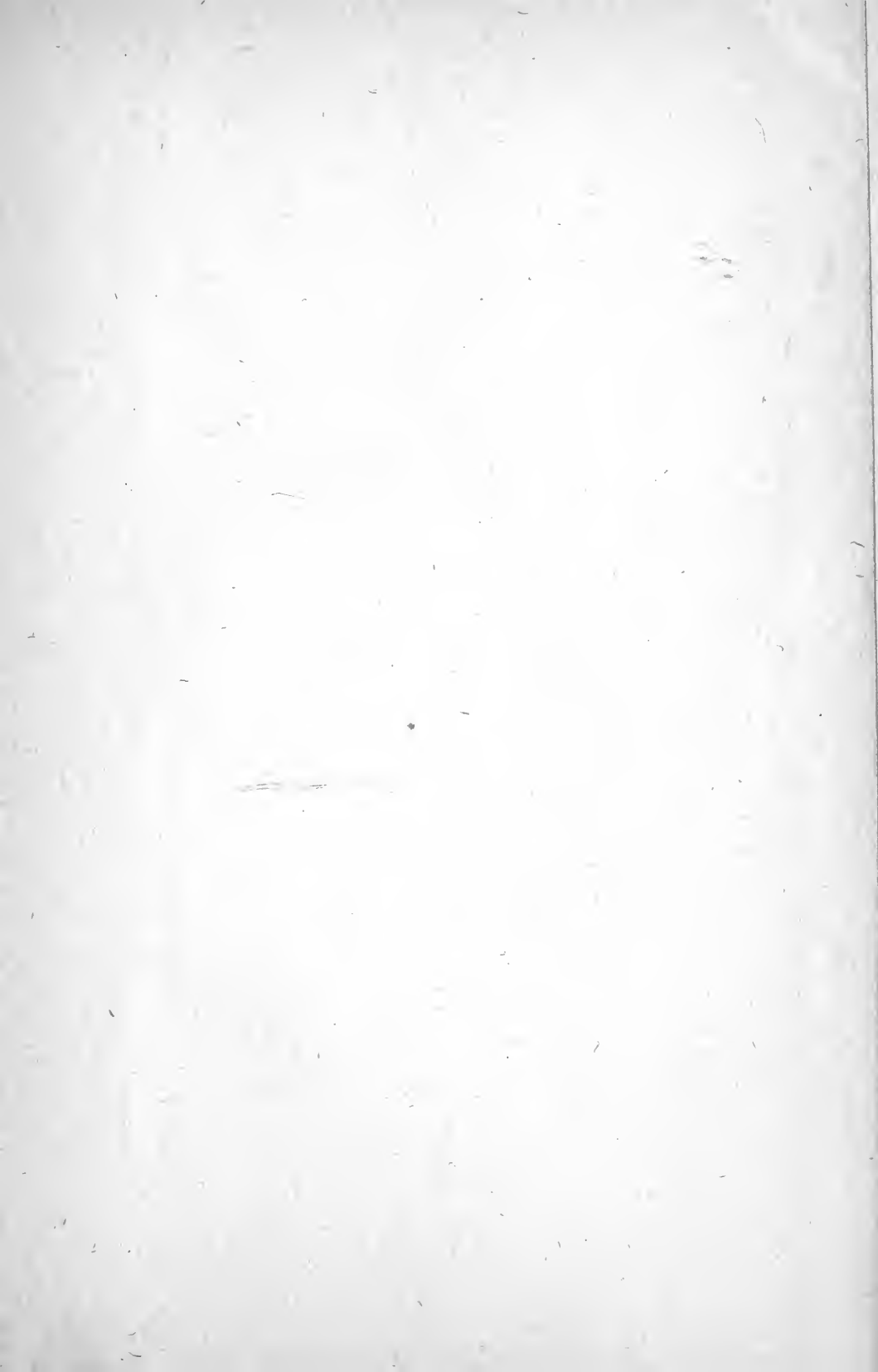
support, how many great events have taken place, and how many of our enemies have disappeared, carried away by the whirlwind that has swept over the whole of Europe! In reviewing in my mind all the grand deeds performed by my people, in thinking of all the disasters that have been the portion of my foes, I can but feel the deepest gratitude to the Almighty who has watched over my dynasty and my subjects, who has permitted me to achieve such wonderful victories. My name shall live for ever in the annals of history. It will be greater than those of Cæsar and Napoleon, and I shall be remembered as one of the benefactors of mankind. I am now on the point of putting my name to the end of one of the most important chapters of my whole existence. Peace with Russia will mean for me an addition of fifty-eight millions of subjects, the acquisition of some of the most fertile provinces of the former Empire of the Romanoffs, the absolute control of the Baltic and of the Black Seas, perhaps that of the Siberian railway, and the prospect to extend my rule further, to wipe out the arrogance of Great Britain from the face of the earth, and to reduce France to the condition of an absolutely crippled state for years to come. How many enemies I had at the beginning of the war! How many Sovereigns opposed me then! And

now look at what has become of them. Nicholas II. in exile in the dreariest spot in the whole of Siberia; King Albert of Belgium wandering in what is left to him of his former dominions; Peter of Servia without a roof to cover his head; Nicholas of Montenegro a semi-prisoner in France, and Lord Kitchener at the bottom of the ocean. And even among my friends, the one man who could have thwarted me, and put forward pretensions to share with me the spoils I have acquired, old Francis Joseph of Austria, removed by a merciful intervention of Providence from my path, and safely stowed away in his coffin in the vault of the Capuchin church in Vienna. Truly these are magnificent results, and when looking upon them I cannot regret the blood that has been spilt, and the tears that have flowed. Thanks to me, and to the determination with which I have gone on my path without allowing myself to swerve from it for one single moment, I have won for Germany, for my beloved Germany, such glory and such renown as no nation ever had before. What does it matter that others have suffered in order to procure them for her? Sometimes in the night when I cannot sleep, and this has often happened to me lately, I seem to see the figure of Sophy Goertz who reproaches me for what I have done, who tells me that I have

been unfaithful to the ideals of my youth, who repeats to me again what she said during the last memorable conversation we had together at Schlitz Castle, that she would give me all I asked of her, providing I abandoned my vain dreams of glory, provided I did not persist in sullyng my name and my reputation in history, by the performance of an iniquity. And then a cold sweat runs down my back, and I am wondering whether after all, she was not right, this woman who loved me so well, and whom I myself loved so dearly; whether it would have been better not to have on my conscience so much blood, so much misery, so many tears, such sufferings inflicted upon innocent beings; whether the day will not come when the recording Angel will "for all these things bring me into judgment"? But then I remember at once that according to the notions of duty of an Hohenzollern, I have only done what Germany expected me to do, that I have carried the renown of our German name all over the earth. And then I feel happy again in the consciousness that all through these years I have had beside me, and fighting together with me, the guns of Professor Rausenberger, and our German God. . . . .

THE END.









LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 028 300 375 9